This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

AH 6J2X 1

Digitized by Google

Period
1969-8
v.18
1920-21

ANDOVER-HARVARD
THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

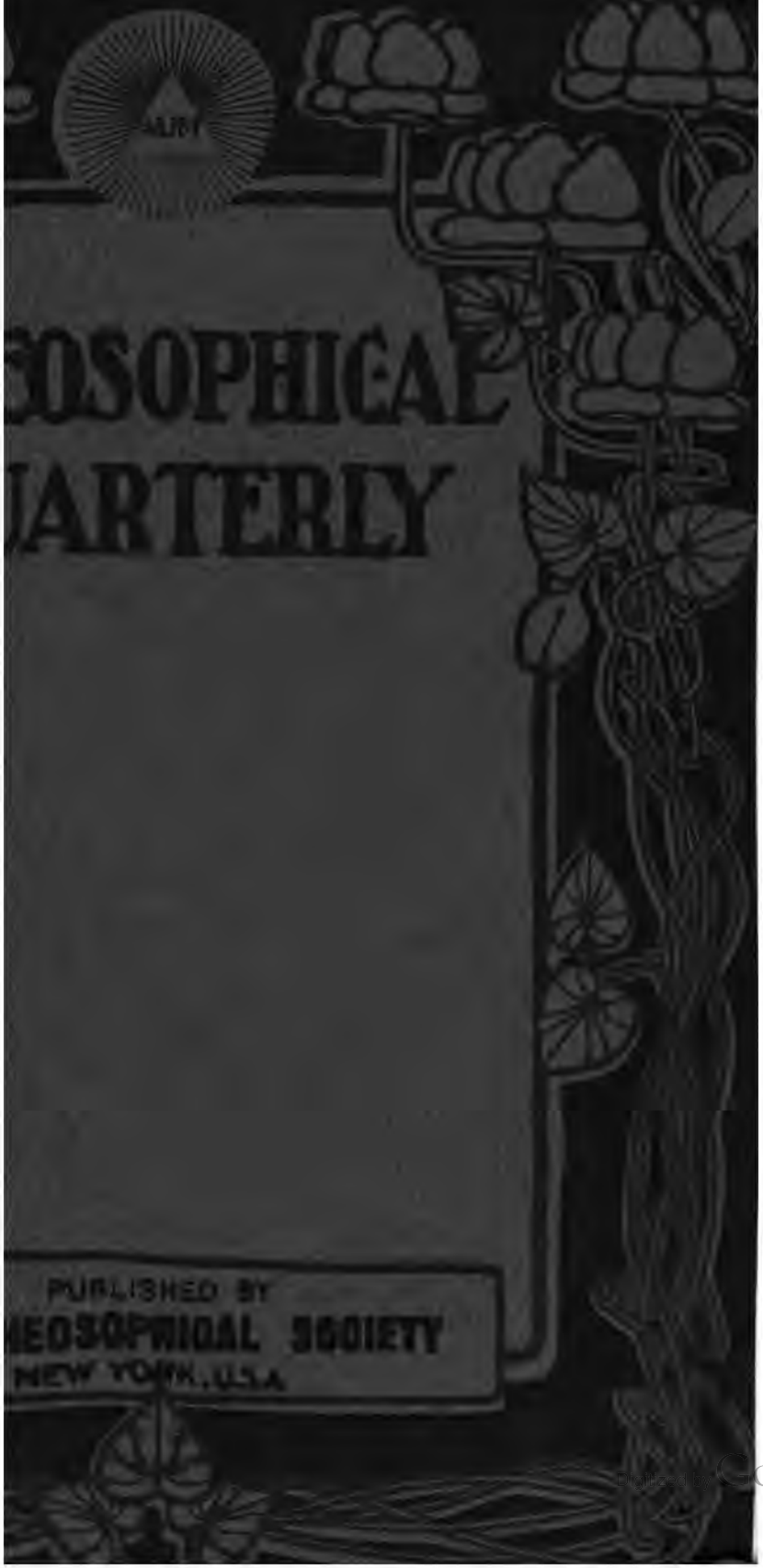
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

JULY, 1920 No. 69



SOSOPHICAL
JARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
HEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Quarterly

Published by The Theosophical Society at
139 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Price for non-members, $1.00 per annum; single copies, 25 cents

In London single numbers may be obtained from and subscriptions sent to Dr. Archibald Keightley, 46 Brook Street, London W. 1, England. Price, 3s.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XVIII., No. 1

	Page
NOTES AND COMMENTS	3
FRAGMENTS	13
HUMAN IMMORTALITY AND PRE-EXISTENCE—II	14
MOULDINGS	21
THE LOGOS DOCTRINE	25
BY THE MASTER—III	28
THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM	32
SUFISM—II	35
STUDYING LIGHT ON THE PATH	41
THE GATES OF GOLD (Reprint)	48
LETTERS TO STUDENTS	50
REVIEWS	57
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	60
T. S. ACTIVITIES	63

Report of T. S. Convention; Letters of Greeting; Notice

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Quarterly

VOLUME XVIII

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $1.00 per annum; single copies, 25 cents

Published by The Theosophical Society at
159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.
July; October; January; April

In Europe, 5s. Single copies may be obtained from, and subscriptions sent to, Dr. Archibald Keightley, 46, Brook Street, London, W. 1, England

Entered July 17, 1905, at Brooklyn, N. Y., as second-class matter, under Act of Congress of July 16, 1894

Copyright, 1920, by The Theosophical Society

Digitized by Google

JULY, 1920

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Theosophy and Modern Problems[1]

I THINK that all the members of the audience realize that this lecture is a part of the Theosophical Convention,—the annual Convention of The Theosophical Society. I remember President Hadley's saying once that he thought the function of a University was to establish and to maintain standards of education. One view of The Theosophical Society is that its purpose is to establish and to maintain standards of spiritual and moral life; not generalities or vague, wide statements, but principles which shall be entirely practical, whether for the organization of religions or nations, or for the conduct of daily life—the daily life of the individual, whether it be typesetting or housekeeping or anything else—to establish a spiritual standard which must be conformed to, if those great or small tasks are to be rightly done.

As to the more particular topic of this afternoon—Theosophy and Modern Problems—let me explain just how it came to be chosen. Some of us were discussing the debates in a legislative body concerning a subject then very much in the public mind—let us say it was the Parliament of the Chinese Republic. We came to the conclusion that the participants in that legislative discussion might be divided into two groups: those who were quite clearly and palpably supporting the wrong side, and those who were supporting right things for entirely wrong reasons. They were united by the fact that there was practically a complete absence of moral principle in them all. (In some ways I am very fond of China, so I will tell you the truth, that this body was not Chinese.) There was that flagrant fact—not a particle of moral principle in the whole thing from beginning to end. One asks oneself, very naturally, where do we find moral principle in public life to-day. What policies can we indicate, what movements can we name, which are quite consciously resting on a clear moral principle which is absolutely sound;

[1] Notes of a lecture by Charles Johnston, on April 25, 1920, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

Digitized by Google

or where are we to find a statesman, or the leaders or the organizers of some undertaking, who are consciously seeking the fundamental moral principle implied, and founding themselves on that? You then realize, I think, that there is an appalling absence of moral principle in the world at this time. I think that is the great modern problem.

I am going to try to elucidate that statement, but the elucidations are not at all so important as the fact itself,—the crying need for a recognition of moral principles to begin with, then a clear understanding of these moral principles, and lastly a firm determination to carry them out in action.

I am going to take an illustration somewhat far away, because it is not expedient that anyone speaking to a representative audience on Theosophy, and as a part of the Theosophical Convention, should take examples so close at hand as to be suspected of partisanship. So while taking a distant example, I ask you not to infer that there are no examples closer at hand. There is no lack of them. But I cannot do them justice, for the reason already given.

So we shall begin a good many miles away, in Bolshevik Russia. I think we realize very clearly that the theories and motives of Bolshevik Russia came from German Socialism. In reality they go back much further. The Socialism of Karl Marx has a fundamental moral defect and a fundamental scientific defect. The moral defect is that it is the expression of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. I think one might say that its fundamental scientific defect is that all its theories are wrong; and one reason for that is that the man who founded them had not a glimmer of an idea of evolution. He published his most notorious book in 1850, nine years before Darwin made public his first discoveries. The system of Marx is the deadest thing from that point of view that could be conceived of. It has no conception of evolution. This false philosophy is the origin of the Russian movement. Lenine—I believe his real name is Ulianoff; he is of an old Russian family and ought to know better—came by way of Berlin, from Switzerland, to go to Russia. I will not say anything about the Russia to which he came or the first revolution which had taken place before he arrived, in July, 1917, to be welcomed by the moderate Socialists. I am not going back at any great length to the breaches of principle of which they had been guilty in their absolute disloyalty to their sovereign and to the Allied cause, and to the flood of lies they put into circulation, to the effect that the Emperor was going to conclude peace with Germany, and that therefore they ought to have a revolution. There had been, in all this, a grave breach of moral principle.

And this is a point on which I wish to lay stress: a breach of moral principle is invariably two things,—a piece of moral treachery to begin with; second, in the result it is invariably calamitous. The working out of that law may not always be immediately evident, but I am quite sure that moral compromise means first moral treachery and then physical

Digitized by Google

disaster. The moral compromise of the first Russian Revolution was moral treachery, which came nigh to bringing defeat to the French, British and Belgian Armies in France, and which brought complete disaster to the first Russian revolutionists.

To come to the second revolutionary group, the Bolshevist group: they founded themselves on the principle of tyranny, and of murder as a means to tyranny (principles which come straight from hell, and I presume will thither return with their votaries); tyranny of the most infamous kind,—domination of the worst over the best, of the lowest over the highest, with murder as a means to tyranny. So far as Russia is concerned, the wheel has not yet run the full circle. But meanwhile I am going to speak on another aspect of that matter, as it concerns the relation of other nations with the Bolshevist Government. There is once more the point of moral compromise and moral treachery. Is it a desire to get certain raw materials—let us say wheat, and platinum, and flax, and what not—which is the real cause of this extraordinary inclination to recognize the Soviet Government? Surely people who advocate that, ought to read the mediæval legends about those who make compacts with the devil. It is very easy to see how retribution will come. It requires no second-sight or gift of prophecy to see what must follow, if this supreme folly is persisted in. If we recognize that detestable tyranny as a legal government, we do two things: we are guilty of moral baseness, and we come under the legal obligation to recognize the Bolshevist representatives, to receive them here and to give them diplomatic immunity. The so-called envoy of Soviet Russia, who is a dyed-in-the-wool German, has already shown what the envoy of a Soviet government is prepared to do. To receive Bolshevist representatives is, of course, putting dynamite under our own government and under everything decent in this and other countries. If we recognize them, and receive their representatives, we give them a free hand. Personally, I am not going to underwrite any fire insurance to cover that liability. If we do it, we shall get just what we deserve, and we shall learn that moral compromise is moral treachery on the one hand, and physical disaster on the other. I think perhaps things will move somewhat rapidly to give us that valuable lesson, if we commit that extreme act of folly.

Now comes the question: if it be our duty to establish and maintain moral standards, not in the abstract, but standards which shall be workable in the smallest details of human life, how are we to reach these moral standards; how are we to formulate them? Precisely for that purpose our work as members of The Theosophical Society exists. This is what we have in view in our discussions, debates and studies; precisely to reach the fundamental moral principles of life. And recognizing, as we do, that there are fashions in that, just as there are in other things, subject to just as rapid changes, and desiring not to be at the mercy of temporary fashions, we carry our thought over long periods of time and try to include the best thought of the best thinkers of all nations through

Digitized by Google

all time. That is the meaning of the second object of the Society, to study the religions and sciences of all times and all nations, and to demonstrate the importance of that study—its importance for our purpose. We have no vague indefinite views, and we are not enamoured of glittering generalities. We want something that we can make work; therefore we are seeking in the religions and philosophies of the world the fundamental principles of human life in order to put them into action.

Perhaps I have told some of you the story of the Chinese politician who was a candidate for office. A delegation came to him to find out where he stood on some such question as the League of Mongols. Our candidate was in the embarrassing position of not knowing whether it was a delegation of the Yellows or the party of the Greens. He asked the delegation to be seated. They said, "Mr. Candidate, we should like to hear about your principles." The candidate was greatly embarrassed, because he did not know which party the delegation came from. If he said he was for a high tariff on the Tibetan frontier, he was in bad favour with the one party. If he advocated the Mongol League, he offended the other. So he said: "Gentlemen, I have principles,—but they can be changed!" Now I think he had a very decided advantage over many contemporary politicians who have *no* principles—though they can be changed, also. To have no moral principles is pretty bad, but there is one thing which has been exemplified, let us say within a hundred years, which is that to have a lot of principles, not one of which is really true, may be fully as calamitous. The emotional lower nature catches reflections from the spiritual world, and these reflections flash and flicker over the lower mind; all kinds of topsy-turvy reflections of moral principles, sprinkled about on the surface of the emotional waves. This makes up much of what is called the new idealism. The psychic reflection of a principle is about as safe to stand upon as, let us say, the reflection of a bridge in the water. There is your real bridge, which is the spiritual principle, and there is the water—the psychic nature—and in the water is the reflected bridge. People who try to found their action on these pseudo-principles, which look like real principles, are exactly as we should be if we tried to cross that picture bridge in the water, and were not very good swimmers. That is a danger which is a very real danger, a dependence on things that look like moral principles and are not real principles at all. It is a part of our work as students of Theosophy, to distinguish the true principles, eliminating the bias of the day, all personal and national bias; trying to take the spiritual testimony of all time and deduce the principles from that.

What are some of the fundamental principles that we do find? Let us say that we take, going back through the ages, works like the *Autobiography of St. Teresa,* or the *Imitation,* or the writings of St. Francis, St. Thomas à Kempis, or the best of the Church Fathers; or going behind these, to their sources in the Gospels; or back to the ages before, to the *Tao-Teh-King,* back to the far off Scriptures of India, to

Digitized by Google

the Upanishads. There we have a wide and sufficient basis from which to extract principles not coloured by personality, time, or national bias. What principles do we find? What is the supreme principle? That everything exists for spiritual life, which is destined to be everlasting. Not only our human life, but the whole palpable and visible universe exists for purposes of the soul, for spiritual life. Everything else is to be subordinated to the spiritual principle, both in our understanding and inspiration, and in our action.

There is a universal statement of the application of that principle by an Indian Master of Life, in the letters in the *Occult World* and *Esoteric Buddhism,* where that Master speaks of the vast progression of humanity from the ages in the past to the ages in the future, and where he indicates that the effort of the Masters through all ages is directed towards one critical problem—namely, to the dead point, if you like, of the curve between materialism and spirituality; to the problem of whether the human race, or the majority of it, shall pass that dead point and ascend the curve which leads to spirituality. The effort of Masters for ages past has been directed to that one problem: that humanity shall pass the dead line from materialism and more dangerous psychism, to enter the spiritual path. That is the application of our principle to all humanity. Life exists that mankind may become spiritual and open the way for the Kingdom of Heaven.

One can come to the other pole and apply the matter to the individual at any moment, in any act, and test both act and situation by the same principle. A man will act in some particular in one of two ways. Which is the way that makes for spiritual life in him? Which is the way that makes against spiritual life in him? There is no other question. Does the way in which he is going to act make for spiritual life, the eternal life, the One Life, in him, or does it bar the way to that life and make for darkness and death? All ethics, all morals are summed up in that one question.

Let us express it a little differently and put it in terms of consciousness. Will he, as a result of his action, be more conscious of the divine Spirit, more conscious of the life which the Masters represent, or will he be less conscious? In the first case, his act is right, his consciousness is deepened, enriched, and perfected; in the second case his act is wrong, he is on the downward path. Will he enter more fully into the life and spirit of the Masters, as the result of his action, or will he enter less fully? There are the two poles, the destiny of all humanity and the individual act, measured by the same standard: that all things exist for eternal life, for the divine life.

Let me try to apply some of the workings-out of this principle in another direction, which has been very much the fashion in this country for several months—I mean the recrudescence of spiritualism. The second object of the Society, I have already spoken of: the study of religions, philosophies and sciences of all nations and over all time. We

Digitized by Google

have a third object, which is not of obligation, but which is nevertheless in the Constitution. That is to study the hidden laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man. When that object was formulated, in 1875, the word psychical covered a multitude of planes. Everything that was not physical in those days was called psychical. To modernize the wording of that object, we should have to say the psychical and spiritual powers latent in man.

I think that many students of Theosophy are familiar with everything of note that has been done in that field for a generation back. Members of our Society have studied the Psychical Research Society's proceedings since the first; they may have heard its speakers, met its leaders.

Much should be said, I think, on the positive side. That is to say, these seekers into psychical things have amassed a very remarkable body of knowledge, of opinion, of fact, touching unseen worlds and planes. To begin with the matter with which they themselves began: the transference of thought, telepathy. Students of Theosophy know that thought transference is a fact. We do not doubt in the least the fact of telepathy, the transference of thoughts, feelings, sensations from one person to another. The next step of the Psychical Research Society was to investigate the transfer of thought, independent of the body and brain. Sir Oliver Lodge indicated that that transference was not carried by brain waves or any kind of etheric waves, because thought transference was not subject to the law of diminishing intensity which governs all wave motions. He went on to say that the transference is not so much from brain to brain as from mind to mind, or soul to soul, using soul in the general sense. If two souls which happen to be embodied at the time can communicate in this way, irrespective of ether waves, is it equally possible that there should be communication with a soul that does not happen to have a body? Can we communicate with such souls? Can we communicate with the dead? He answered in the affirmative and adduced much evidence, as in his book containing communications from his son Raymond, which has been so widely read.

What attitude is a student of Theosophy, generally speaking, justified in taking toward that situation? On the one hand, there are very evident facts, which, moreover, clearly illustrate many of our own ideas and thoughts and views. For instance, we have held for a long time that we make our own future; our own after-death setting and furniture and so forth, we make ourselves. It is worked out in what is called the doctrine of Devachan, or the state of bliss; that paradise is not a universal monochrome, but depends upon the amount and colour of spiritual life in the individual in each case. The outstanding fact in all this body of psychic communications from the dead, is the demonstration that we are right in holding that view. Each of these excarnate individuals is going on doing just what he was doing in ordinary life, and each says the spiritual world consists in just that kind of thing. If he were a tinker,

Digitized by Google

he will say the spiritual life, the life after death, consists in tinkering,—in other words, the forces that he handled in material life continue after death. This appears to be well supported by a mass of sound psychical research. Therefore we do not, broadly speaking, quarrel with the conclusions of psychical research. But do we endorse the moral principle of this research? Do these seekers begin by asking themselves: is this morally right, this communication with the dead? Is it morally right? That is the fundamental question. Until you have answered that question, you have no right to take another step. We hold that it is, broadly speaking, morally wrong, and for many reasons.

The first fact that we see is this: let us say that Sir Oliver Lodge or one of his colleagues seeks to investigate the spiritual planes of life—the plane, let us say, of paradise. Is there any claim on their part that they open within themselves the spiritual eye to see those planes, that they view what they study with their own spiritual vision? Not in the least. How do they get it? Through mediums, of whom Mrs. Piper was perhaps the best known, though she was only one of a score. These mediums, for the most part, are morbid pathological specimens. Do these mediums claim that they themselves have the spiritual vision which enables them to see into the world of paradise of which we are speaking? So far as I know—and I have studied the thing for many years—not at all. The medium is in a comatose condition, and something else or some one else is speaking or writing through the medium. After the session is over, the medium has no understanding of what really went on. The medium was comatose in the full sense of the word—unconscious, or conscious in some lower physical way, but spiritually conscious not at all.

Now there are a number of points one might pick up. To begin with, what about this question of the medium, already pathological, already morbid, opening the doors of his or her inner nature to whatever happens to come? Would you open the doors of your house or your rooms in the same way? Is it not clearly prudent to find out first what sort of things might come in? It might be angels, it might be the opposite. How is the comatose medium going to tell? Have they made any study of the denizens of these innumerable unseen planes? Have they any information about them? We have an idea that there are a great many kinds of things, clean and unclean, and that it is, to say the least, unwise to open the door and go to sleep, leaving the door open.

There is a fundamental objection that we have to that kind of research: it does not demand the spiritual growth, spiritual unfoldment, spiritual vision in the investigator, which we believe to be essential on moral and practical grounds. We believe that this is one meaning of the old saying: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." In other words, the true door of spiritual life is the door of aspiration and spiritual growth. He who tries to enter the spiritual world, to get

Digitized by Google

knowledge by another way, is a thief and a robber. That is the moral principle.

The practical principle is that he will not know, in the least, of what value his material is; gold dust, nuggets or dross will be all the same. And surely it is unsatisfactory, from the standpoint of science, not to know what your results are when you have got them. The moral point is that there is no demand for previous spiritual growth and sacrifice, no demand that the lower nature shall be purified.

We believe that a moral and spiritual compromise is made by approaching the spiritual world in that way. The right way is that of spiritual development, sacrifice and growth; of illumination. And because it is a moral compromise—a breach of moral rectitude—to go that way, we believe it will be highly dangerous in its results. You will remember Portia said the quality of mercy is blessed in both him who gives and who receives. In that same way, we hold that spiritualistic research of that kind is highly dangerous both to those who communicate —the so-called spirits—and to those who are communicated with—the investigators. Let me speak of the danger to the latter first. It seems to me that as a result of Sir Oliver Lodge's investigations and the mass of material that goes with them, there is established in people's minds generally, a vision of false immortality—that is, an immortality which is gained simply by "passing over" (we call it dying), irrespective of moral character and moral accomplishment. The result of that is quite evident in the lowering of the whole view of immortal life. The scriptures of the world which we study and try to understand, are unanimous on one point amongst others: namely, that real immortality comes through sacrifice and holiness, and in no other way. The Upanishads are as emphatic and clear cut on that as are the Gospels. The door of holiness, the path of sacrifice, is the only means to real immortality. He that loveth his life shall lose it; he that hateth his life—that is to say, offers his life as a sacrifice—shall keep it unto life eternal. Our feeling about the body of psychic research regarding those who have passed over, is that it has degraded and vulgarized the whole field of immortality. Here is the penalty, on the one side: the degrading of the whole idea of immortality for the seekers.

On the other hand, we have certain views as to what takes place in those who die. How do we get these views? From those who have real vision, gained by real and most arduous sacrifice, lasting through ages; who have real holiness, real aspiration, a real life in the eternal and spiritual world, who look down on these things from above, instead of feeling for them blindfolded, from below. What are certain of the fundamental facts which they give? That the whole purpose and importance of this present life depends upon and consists in what it can give to the soul. The soul is the undying immortal, who stands above this life, and the last life, and the next life. What can that life yield to the immortal? It is a part of the teaching that, when a human being dies, he enters into what

Digitized by Google

one might call a stage of gestation, in which there is a solution of the materials of his nature (using "materials" in the larger sense)—a period in which is sifted out that which belongs to the immortal and is to be handed over to the immortal, and that which belongs to time and is not to be assimilated by the immortal. That is a period of gestation. I use the word advisedly, to indicate what a precarious condition it is; every injurious influence must be warded off. There must be silence and stillness, in order that the aspiration which is in that soul may awake; that the finer part of the nature may be drawn upward to the immortal; in order that all that can be given may be given to the true owner, the undying soul. But what can be more fatal to the personality than to have this stillness broken, as if by the ringing and clanging of telephone bells, calling it to come back to this world? The din and whirl and clang and clatter of physical life is brought once more to the ears of the soul, in that sensitive condition of gestation;—the geese cackling, as Portia says, and the whole whirl of physical thoughts, desires, appetites, revived once more. It is likely to be an abortive soul-birth, with all the calamity that that implies. The person concerned may know nothing of it. It is unfortunately true of this world that when we are in the direst danger, we often think we are quite safe. And in the same way, those "spirits" may think they are safe, when they are in great danger and on their way to dissolution. They are no judges, and though they may be exultant, and delighted with the happy hunting grounds in which they find themselves, it does not for a moment follow that this is the right thing for them to do; that it is well for them to do this, or well for us to encourage it.

I am not going to expand that, because I do not wish to enforce a conclusion, or even to lay great stress upon the conclusion. What I do wish to repeat is: moral compromise is doubly fatal because it is a moral betrayal and certain to end in physical disaster. That is the text which I do wish you to carry away and to think over, to see for yourselves whether it is true. Try it. Use it as a standard in one case after another. Keep that principle rather than the illustrations.

* * * * * * *

In conclusion, this: we have our clear spiritual and moral standards. We seek always to clarify them, to make them more sure; to test them; to try them; to live by them. And because the world is in such a whirlwind of moral confusion, it is of utmost importance that members of the Society, students of Theosophy, should have very clear moral principles and should carry them out in action. It is of the utmost importance,—the one solid ground in a world of confusion, in a broken mass of shifting ice such as Peary described near the pole.

If we succeed and are able to establish our standards, not merely to carry them out ourselves, but gradually to win to them, finally, a working majority of mankind, what will be the fruit? Our first great principle is that everything is for spiritual life; that all that we see, all that we

Digitized by Google

are, makes for spiritual being, for ourselves and for others, in a unity of life—of spiritual life—destined to be everlasting; a life not untenanted now, but already occupied by the Masters, the lords of spiritual life, who have attained, who are now what we look for as the ultimate fruit,—as the realization of just that principle, just that spiritualizing of the majority, and perhaps of *all* mankind, in ages to come.

We work for the drawing of mankind into that spiritual life; the drawing of that spiritual life into mankind, so that these lords of spiritual life, the Masters, who at present are checked and thwarted at every point where they try to help us; who are met with resistance of mind, of heart, of every part of our nature, shall, on the contrary, be welcomed with humility and the greatest gratitude, to take the greatest possible part in the guidance of our lives; that the lords of spiritual life shall come amongst men, and help us to live our lives, shall guide our powers, and lead us in their wisdom and mercy, in their grace and love, along the path that they themselves have already trodden to our home, our everlasting home in the Eternal.

Lord, how often shall I resign myself, and wherein shall I forsake myself?

Always, yea, every hour; as well in small things as in great.—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

Digitized by Google

FRAGMENTS

THE roses were blooming in the garden, and the tall lilies rocked gently to and fro, scattering their incense on the air. The golden sunshine lay caressingly across the grass and hid in the shadows of the leaves. So blue the sky, where the soft, white clouds were sailing, serene in their heavenly atmosphere! I stood in the midst, and wondered and gave thanks. Then the Master's voice came, and the garden hushed itself to listen. As always it was clear and even, but behind it was a rain of tears.

"In my garden the flowers are fading," he said; "some of them are dead. I water and tend, but the burning sun is drying it up. Pray that the clouds may gather again and save my garden."

And so we prayed and prayed,—the flowers prayed, and the sunshine prayed, and the breezes prayed, and the very stones cried aloud. And still we are praying:

Great Lord of all, let not the sun of this material life scorch with fierce heat the seedlings of thy love. Send the rain of thy mercy upon us, and the sweet dew of thy grace; if need be, thy lightnings and thy thunders, and the downpours of an opened heaven. Grant us the blessed gifts of tears and of repentance. Draw us to the cool silences of reflection, that we may see the real from the false, the eternal from the evanescent; and choose, as in such vision we must choose. For his dear sake who watered this garden with his blood. *Amen.*

Yesterday I met again the angels that I saw a year ago and more, whose eyes were red with weeping. They spend their days upon the battle-fields, burying the dead.

One said: we buried few in the early years of this war, for we carried them to heaven, where shortly they awoke, strengthened and rejoicing. Now so many die; and infrequent are the flights to heaven.

In a world of reflections, that which we call life is death, and dying, living. He that saveth his life shall lose it, wrapping his talent in the napkin of self, and hiding it in the earth; later, he shall be cast into outer darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth, in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.

CAVÉ.

Digitized by Google

HUMAN IMMORTALITY AND PRE-EXISTENCE

I

FOR many years the Eastern teaching of reincarnation could find scant hearing in the West, save from the open platform of The Theosophical Society. Even to-day, when it has become a common theme for the story-teller and novelist—as something pregnant with the fascination of the mysterious, and so opening the door of dreams to prosaic minds and lives—it is still very rare to come upon a clear presentation and intelligent, philosophical advocacy of its tenets from the pen of a Western scholar. In a little volume of 120 pages, however, members of the Society may see the fulfilment of the old proverb, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days"; for here the doctrine is returned to us, no longer in foreign guise and in terms borrowed from an older race, but as the native product of modern thought. The title of the book is that of this article, *Human Immortality and Pre-existence,* published by Longmans, Green & Co. The author, Dr. J. Ellis M'Taggart, is not a member of the Society, nor does he refer to Theosophy as such. Fellow and Lecturer in Trinity College, Cambridge, the recipient of honorary degrees from both Cambridge and St. Andrews, he is best known as a student of Hegel, and for his scholarly comments on Hegel's cosmology and logic,—this book being, indeed, but a part of a larger work, *Some Dogmas of Religion.* Brief though it is, it must be ranked as one of the most valuable and stimulating studies of the philosophy of immortality that have appeared in recent years. The style is clear and easy, and free from technicalities. The argument is cogent; and the fact that it does not assume the ordinary premises of Theosophy makes the theosophical nature of its conclusions the more striking.

Rightly believing that a lengthy and difficult incursion into metaphysics would be out of place in a popular treatise, Dr. M'Taggart makes no attempt to establish those positive arguments for immortality which only a thorough-going consideration of the fundamental nature of reality can be made to yield; but confines the first part of his volume to clearing away the materialistic presuppositions which are usually urged against man's continued existence after death, and devotes the second half to showing that any valid logical argument for a future life must point equally to pre-existence. It is the latter part of the book which is thus of special interest to students of Theosophy; but the two chapters are so intimately related, and Dr. M'Taggart's method of attack so skilfully direct and free from technical abstractions, that it will be well to give

Digitized by Google

a brief outline of the earlier discussion, whose argument has corollaries that are of vital moment to us all.

Dr. M'Taggart proposes three questions which the first chapter is to answer. "(1) Is my self an activity of my body? (2) Is my present body an essential condition of the existence of my self? (3) Is there any reason to suppose that my self does not share the transitory character which I recognize in all the material objects around me?"

The first question necessitates a somewhat lengthier discussion than the other two, for which it clears the way, and must be read to be appreciated. Dr. M'Taggart touches on the hypothesis that the body and the self, matter and spirit, may be co-ordinate and independent realities, whose interaction constitutes human life on earth. But though this view may, in his opinion, be held consistently, he deems it less simple, and therefore less satisfactory, than a monism which attributes fundamental reality to only one of the two. When led thus to a choice, he shows the self-contradictions that inevitably appear in every attempt to make matter fundamental, and argues with much skill that, "So far is this from being the case that . . . we have no reason to suppose that matter exists at all, and to talk of matter existing without consciousness is absurd. Matter is so far from being the sole reality, of which the self is only an activity, that, taken by itself, it is not a reality at all. . . .

"The bearing of this discussion on the question of our immortality is that it disproves a hypothesis which would render immortality incredible. If the self was an activity of the body, it would be impossible that it should continue to exist when the body had ceased to exist. We might as well suppose, in that case, that the digestion survived the body as that the self did."

Though the self cannot be merely an activity of the body, it might yet be possible that it was dependent for its existence upon the body. "If A, whenever it exists, is necessarily accompanied by B, then the cessation of B is a sure sign of the cessation of A." This introduces the second question.

"What evidence is there in favor of such a view? In the first place, while we have plenty of experience of selves who possess bodies, we have no indubitable experience of selves who exist without bodies, or after their bodies have ceased to exist. Besides this, the existence of a self seems to involve the experience of sensations. Without them, the self would have no material for thought, will or feeling, and it is only in these that the self exists. Now there seems good reason to suppose that sensations never occur in our minds at present without some corresponding modifications of the body. This is certainly the case with normal sensations. And, even if the evidence for clairvoyance and thought transference were beyond dispute, it could never prove the possibility of sensation without bodily accompaniments. For it could not exclude—indeed, it seems rather to suggest—the existence of bodily accompaniments of an obscure and unusual kind.

Digitized by Google

"But, after all, these considerations would, at the most, go to show that *some* body was necessary to my self, and not that its present body was necessary. Have we, after the results already reached, any reason to suppose that the death of the body must indicate anything more than that the self had transferred its manifestations to a new body, and had, therefore, passed from the knowledge of the survivors, who had only known it through the old body? . . . The most that a body can be is an essential accompaniment of the self. And then the supposition that the self has another body would fit the facts quite as well as the supposition that the self has ceased to exist.

"There seems no reason why such a change should not be instantaneous. But even if it were not so, no additional difficulty would be created. If a body is essential to the action of a self, the self would be in a state of suspended animation in the interval between its possession of two bodies—a state which we might almost call one of temporary non-existence. But this is nothing more than what happens, so far as we can observe, in every case of dreamless sleep. During such a sleep the self, so far as we know, is unconscious—as unconscious as it could be without a body. Yet this does not prevent its being the same man who went asleep and who woke up again. Why should the difficulty be greater in a change of bodies?

"And then, have we any reason, after all, to suppose that a body is essential to a self? It seems to me that the facts only support a very different proposition—namely, that *while a self has a body,* that body is essentially connected with the self's mental life.

"For example, no self can be conceived as conscious unless it has sufficient data for its mental activity. This material is only given, so far as our observations can go, in the form of sensations, and sensations again, so far as our observations can go, seem invariably connected with changes in a body. But it does not follow, because a self which has a body cannot get its data except in connexion with that body, that it would be impossible for a self without a body to get data in some other way. It may be just the existence of the body which makes these other ways impossible at present. If a man is shut up in a house, the transparency of the windows is an essential condition of his seeing the sky. But it would not be prudent to infer that, if he walked out of the house, he could not see the sky because there was no longer any glass through which he might see it."

Dr. M'Taggart considers, also, the possible bearing of ghost stories and the phenomena of spiritualism upon the question of the survival of the self. He attaches, however, little importance to them; and it will be seen how closely the clear common-sense of his discussion fits into the theosophical view that such phenomena—where genuine—more frequently evidence the temporary survival of the Kama-Rupa than any manifestation of the real individuality, or self.

Digitized by Google

"Much of the evidence offered on this subject is doubtless utterly untrustworthy. But there is a good deal which investigation has failed to break down. And there is much to be said in support of the view that, after all deductions have been made for fraud, error and coincidence, there is still a sufficient residuum to justify the belief that such apparitions are in some cases caused by the dead man whose body they represent.

"But the mere proof that there was this causal connexion between the dead man and the apparition would not suffice to prove that the dead man had survived his death. A chain of effects may exist long after its original cause is destroyed. . . . And, so far as I know, all stories of apparitions would be equally well explained by the theory that a man might, before his death, initiate a chain of circumstances which would cause his body to appear, after his death, under certain conditions, to men still alive. In this case, nothing would be proved about his existence after death."

To answer his third question, "Is there any reason to suppose that my self does not share the transitory character which I recognize in all the material objects around me?" Dr. M'Taggart points out that what perishes does so only through being resolved again into the separate parts which compose it. Forms of energy cease to be, as one form passes into another; but science holds that the energy itself is neither destroyed nor diminished. Though the self is complex, it is not, in Dr. M'Taggart's view, a compound; and so could not be destroyed, as a brick wall might be, by removing and scattering its elements without those elements themselves being destroyed. "If it did cease to exist, it could only be by annihilation. It is not only the form that would have changed, but that the form and content alike would have perished." And for this there is no analogy in science.

Dr. M'Taggart acknowledges, at once, that this is very far from showing that the self must be immortal—though he reaffirms his conviction that a thorough metaphysical discussion of the nature of reality must indubitably support such a conclusion. But the argument, as given, does at least tend to suggest that so far as the self is one thing and not many, a unit and not a mere congeries—that is, so far as a man's life and will is the expression of a single coherent purpose—it is not subject to the transitoriness which experience shows us is the fate of compounds, but which science does not ascribe either to universal energy or to what it views as irreducible into parts.

We close this first chapter, therefore, with the feeling that Dr. M'Taggart has fulfilled the purpose he set himself in it. He has shown us the unconscious materialism of common thought as the self-created, illogical veil of illusion which it in fact is, and he has made us more eager than before to penetrate that veil, and to examine anew the reality beneath. What is that reality? What is the truth of our own being and of the life about us? What is the self, of whose immortality we speak?

Digitized by Google

Our mind turns back, in review of the path along which we have been led, to the initial statements and questions from which we started.

"It is better," Dr. M'Taggart told us in his opening paragraphs, "to speak of the immortality of the self, or of men, than of the immortality of the soul. The latter phrase suggests untenable views. For in speaking of the identity of a man during different periods of his bodily life, we do not usually say he is the same soul, but the same self, or the same man. And to use a different word when we are discussing the prolongation of that identity after death, calls up the idea of an identity less perfect than that which lasts through a bodily life. The form in which the question is put thus suggests that the answer is to be in some degree negative—that a man is not *as much* himself after death as he is before it, even if something escapes from complete destruction.

"Moreover, it is customary, unfortunately, to say that a man *has* a soul, not that he *is* one. Now if our question is put in the form 'Has man an immortal soul?' an affirmative answer would be absurd. So far as it would mean anything it would mean that the man himself was the body, or something which died with the body—at any rate was not immortal—and that something, not himself, which he owned during life, was set free at his death to continue existing on its own account. For these reasons it seems better not to speak of the soul, and to put our question in the form 'Are men immortal?' "

As we reflect upon these paragraphs, it is clear that the mere survival, after death, of some abstract essence of our being—the mere continuity of the life principle which animates us now—would be very far from giving us the immortality we desire. What we crave, if not for ourselves yet certainly for those we love, is a personal immortality which shall preserve even the subtile, indefinable but unmistakable, personal traits, which now stamp thought and speech and act with the hallmark of their individuality. What promise does Dr. M'Taggart's argument give us that such an immortality will be ours? And how perfect is the "identity" which lasts even through one bodily life?

We look back over the years we have lived to what we were in youth. We are the same, yet not the same. Some who were then our friends are such no longer. They say of us, "He has changed; he is not the man he was": and when this is repeated to us, we know that it is true, and are, on the whole, glad that it is true. We have put away some of the toys of childhood, and the touch of reality has transformed us. We would not have it otherwise. We would not now change places with those erstwhile friends who are still, at fifty, essentially the same as they were at fifteen—still playing at dolls in the nursery, still living in a world of their own fancy, still without eyes or nerves for the great drama of real life, still ignorant of reality's vibrant touch on naked heart and soul, still feeding their poor, starved emotions on the counterfeit presentment of fiction and the stage. What they are still, we were once; but we would not wish that what then constituted our identity—in our own eyes,

Digitized by Google

no less than in theirs—had remained unchanged and "perfect." We are grateful that that self was not immortal. Not to have changed would have been not to have lived. It is immortal life we seek; not undying death.

Looking at our life thus, we see that to live is to die. It is doubtful if we can ever know the self, or find its permanent identity, in any single cross section of our being. It inheres, rather, in those dynamic, deep-hidden loyalties, whose unchanging purposes compel the change we suffer. In obedience to them, we see, with St. Paul, that we "die daily," and the passing of each moment leaves us other than we were. The tragedy of death, if it be tragedy, is not confined to the final act of dissolution of the body, but is inherent in every act; and every moment shows us the mystery of outer change in obedience to an inner permanence.

If this be true, it would appear that we have more data than we have believed for the study of death and immortality. We may examine them, in little, as familiar facts of experience; and instead of only being able to look forward to a unique and unknown change, of which we can form no more than *a priore* judgments from our present standpoint, we can also look back upon changes, essentially similar in kind, however less in degree, and thus gain an analogy for death more as it may appear to one who has died.

From this new viewpoint the tragedy of change takes on a different aspect. What we most regret is not that so much of what we were has passed away, but that we were so little of what we could wish to have endure: not that the waste products of the years have been left behind, but that the years were wasted, and that we have not now the permanent possessions we might have gained from them. Our true loss is not in the severing of youthful friendships which were never real, but that so many of our real friendships have been only of our maturity, and so are not enriched by the common memories of love and hope and labour, shared in youth. The closer the tie of recent years, the more we miss in it the past it does not hold. But where true friendship has long persisted, the past lives on in the present. At a word, a look, a trick of speech or gesture, the man who is my friend stands before me as the boy who was my friend. It does not matter that he is old and grey; he is also the child; also in his prime. And the reason is simply this: childhood and prime and age have alike been given to the unchanged current of our common love and common purpose. By its permanence all that was given to it has become permanent too.

May it be that this familiar characteristic of long friendships is but one manifestation of a far deeper principle, upon which the personal immortality we crave in fact depends? That there is a contagion of permanence—a divine river of immortal reality that imparts immortality to all immersed in it—as well as a contagion of corruption and decay? That what is of itself mortal may become immortal as it is given to immortal purposes? If there is not some such principle in life as this

Digitized by Google

—making valid the statement that whoso giveth his life, for his Master's sake, shall keep it unto life eternal—it is difficult to see that Dr. M'Taggart's arguments can prove more than the immortality of some spiritual principle within us, which may have little likeness to what we are to-day in our own eyes and the eyes of our friends. If the leaving behind us of the environment and interests, that once absorbed our thought and desires, works such changes as we have ourselves experienced in this one bodily life, will not the falling away, at death, of all that is dependent upon the body, of necessity work a far greater change upon all that has not been taken up and absorbed in loyalties, desires and purposes that are independent of the body, and which death, therefore, cannot touch? Do not the very questions Dr. M'Taggart propounds, the very arguments he uses, suggest that personal immortality, as distinct from the immortality of the soul, is something that must depend, not upon the nature of pure spirit, but upon the nature of the individual personality; that personal immortality is not something that is assured, but something that must be won?

What part of what I am to-day is but an activity of my body, depending solely upon it? What part of the thought, desire and will that make up my personal consciousness, and constitute my personality, are concerned only with bodily things? What part could persist unchanged when death takes my body from me? To what extent is my life a single coherent whole, animated by an eternal, indivisible principle or purpose; or to what extent is it a mere congeries and compound of conflicting or incongruous elements? These are the central questions in Dr. M'Taggart's discussion of immortality; and they return to us, no longer abstract or metaphysical, but as of immediate and intimate application to ourselves. They are questions for heart-searching self-examination, and as such we commend them to all readers of his work.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

(To be continued)

Digitized by Google

MOULDINGS

The more the marble wastes
The more the statue grows.

ONCE I was painting a plaster angel, a dear little creature, modelled by some deft Italian hand, guided by a heart urging it to seek for something of the smooth clear sweetness that is the birthright of little angels. Through some miscalculated gesture the tiny face became irreparably injured—it is so minute that the least marring destroys all human, or rather, angelic semblance. Ruin stared me in my own face, too, for I needed the figure for the redemption of a promise and there was no time to replace it. The only solution was to procure some plaster and try to repair damages. It was with a jumping heart, and armed only with a potato knife and some sandpaper, that I started to model for the first time in my life. I had heard that a sculptor was a man who makes faces—and busts, and I felt sure it was true. To begin with, there was only the indistinguishable mass of fresh plaster, and the potato knife, and infinite space, and *me*. I said to myself, "Hidden under this grotesqueness there lurks a little creature of God and it is up to me to find her," and at once went to meet a wonderful experience, epochal, fruitful in spiritual lessons. The first lesson was that a most fastidious patience was of the essence of the job. One slip, one thousandth of a thousandth of an inch, and you slip backwards through the æons. Angels are not made as quickly as Rome was built. As I scratched and chipped and smoothed, something emerged—something not human, but living, animal, uncanny. Were the biological processes of time's beginnings to be enacted before my shuddering gaze? I tried again, and a human being showed itself—a blood-curdling horror of a human being, a thousand years old, seamed with nameless evil, icily malignant; I chipped off some more and achieved Hindenburg with a thyroid enlargement—not prepossessing but encouraging, as indicating that I might be approaching the laggards of the Fourth Race. It was impossible to linger there; my next creation was a portly and pompous elderly lady,—you could positively hear her say "Can you recommend a cook?" A few strokes reduced her to youth, but she was a young woman who once caused me grave annoyance at a glove counter. How sculptors ever dodge a high spiritual insight baffles me, for they live with an arc light turned on the Divine scheme. Let them but take a tool and a lump of plaster, and deep mysteries unfold for them—cosmic processes, reincarnations, recessions, ascensions! They may pass in an hour through the dark abysses of time to the dawn of light, from the dawn of light to

Digitized by Google

the glory of high noon. I wish I could tell you that by-and-by my little angel smiled upon me—but no! My best result was a quite presentable young person who had rehearsed for an angel's part in some performance or other, but in the meantime a deal of sculping had been done on me.

With the hope that my failure was due to lack of proper tools and that I was perchance a sculptor *manqué* after all, I asked a real sculptor to tell me the names of his various instruments, thinking at least to make this paper sound more knowing. To my astonishment he did not know them and did not care. He said indifferently, "Oh, I know what I want and I just pick it up." "But," I protested indignantly, "I have only a kitchen knife and some sandpaper." "Excellent tools," was the reply, "*if* you also have a hand and an eye,"—and his "if" was concentrated essence of scepticism.

His words gave me to think. Those Who are forming us "know just the tools they want and pick them up." But *Who* are forming us? Those who work in darkness or those who work in light? And what raw material do we offer them? Here, Galatea chooses her Pygmalion. Pygmalions either for good or ill, cannot sculp in warm butter or in feather pillows, but granted normally workable raw material, and who shall do our shaping? For the Will of man is free. Here Satan waits, past master of the art, his studio the kingdoms of this world, his tools superbly fashioned for their purpose. He and the chelas of his atelier flood the world with specimens of their prowess. Precisely as you pause before a canvas and say, "That is surely a da Vinci," so may you pause before a human and say, "That is surely a Satan;" and you don't need a lorgnette either. If you cannot believe it, board a street car, go to a moving picture show, walk a block, and see what the genius of darkness can do with humanity, given the etching tools of vanity, greed, animality, ignorance, boredom; given the viscid plasticity of indifference, sloth, credulity. Then turn to art, which is but a reflection of the human. A few weeks ago one of the principal Fifth Avenue art shops had an exhibition of figurines that were marvels of faultless modelling wasted on the production of a lot of little obscene semi-human beasts, done with such deftness, such certainty of wrist, such sureness of line and curve, that people walked round them laughing with pleasure at the mere stunt of it, and the town was hugely taken with these little masterpieces of rottenness.

A world that rebels against discipline and thinks to get away with it, is going to be disgusted by-and-by, when it meets the mirrors and sees itself modelled back into an ugliness that it will take generations to smooth out again. Someone said, "Those children are beautiful because they look so well whipped," and it is true that in a group of children you can unerringly separate the spoilt ones from the trained, by the quiet eyes and contented mouths of the latter. Love's chastisements may be dodged for a long while, but the face grows hard and empty in the process. A summer was once spent on a shore that prophesied of

Digitized by Google

Paradise, but where a hundred people were kept in a state of exasperated wretchedness by the children of a family in which was being tried out some uncanny cult or other, the firmest tenets of which seemed to be that small children could be safely left to bring themselves up, and that the moral judgment was fostered best in an atmosphere of turbulent rebellion. The eldest child was a boy of eight years, and the cult was going strong as far as he was concerned. When he set fire to the stable and pushed a small sister in to see if it hurt, we christened him Nero. Nero strode the bluffs leaving anguish and devastation in his wake. He was followed at a safe distance by a nervously prostrated governess, who had orders to keep him in sight but not to interfere with him. The former she did when it was physically possible, but the latter the wealth of Asia could not have bribed her to. It was awful to watch day by day the lines of evil forming and deepening and masking that baby face. Had he been as big as he was bad, we must all have packed our baggage and fled the scene. The terrible thought was that he soon would be. As we watched him refusing to bathe at bathing time; marching into the sea fully clothed at meal times; kicking the shins of heroic protestants; clutching, bawling, swaggering, terrorizing,—we could only say, "God pity his future wife and family; God punish his silly parents."

There is perhaps a touch of spoilt child in the best of us. They may keep us in sight if They don't interfere with us. Did I say "the best of us?" No—not in those few, *so* few, in whom docility has grown to an ardour of rapt co-operation, who lend themselves with a still passion to the gentle modelling of Those who would have them lovely. Weal and woe, joy and sorrow, storm and calm—"Sunshine we give you today, but to-morrow, dear little angel of becoming, pass into the shadow, and when that has done its work, you shall emerge once more with *just* the look we want, and the impatient ones who watch shall begin to suspect the meaning of sunshine and shadow." And how we hate the sandpaper! "Weal or woe," "Bane or blessing,"—these are fine mouth-filling phrases. We protest, "I can stand the big sorrows. I know they must come, but it is these little fretting things that kill me." As if the little fretting things were outside the plan. My little angel would never have looked even decent without sandpaper. The most minute changes could be brought about by it that yet made all the difference. Used lightly and persistently, and where the faults were, curves grew disciplined and acquiescent; she appeared then like a little person who might "sweep a room unto the Lord and make that and the action fine." She rose from plane to plane by sandpaper.

A deep-lurking spiritual instinct tells the striving race of man that beauty is its most profound obligation. It is asked of us; the gods wait for it; the whole creation groaneth and travaileth until it is made evident. Pigments are nothing, words are nothing, marble and stone are nothing, the flesh is nothing—raw material all of it, but in it hides the loveliness that is our quest. "That Which overshadows us" whispers incessantly

Digitized by Google

of beauty. The saint and the artist know this, and in their several ways they count the world well lost, they touch the garment's hem and are transfigured. Beauty from within out, is a shining of slow growth. Again and again the hasty world thinks to snatch and apply it without the travail, but that may not be. The meanest little lithograph or vase of paper flowers is the expression of an aching need; the tattooing of the savage is a stumbling reach for it; the haunters of beauty parlors are driven by the urge—

> For oh! the gold in Helen's hair,
> And how she cried when that departed!

But Beauty smilingly eludes all hands save those that will be scarred for her; she withdraws from flesh for the sake of spirit; she gives and she takes away again; blessed be her Name.

> Slow grows the perfect pattern that He plans
> His wistful hands between;

and surely it is our own fault that the emphasis should ever be upon the "slow." If we would only be still, only be plastic in His Hands, the whole business is done with one tool, and its name is Love. When we act like bad children at face-washing time, twisting about and refusing to take the impress, we force Them reluctantly to reach for that cruel-looking, sharp-edged sorrow, that subduing pain, that corroding disappointment—and their name too is Love. There is a curve of the lips that only discipline lovingly accepted will bring; there is a gentle brilliance in eyes that have looked and understood why sorrow *is;* there is a radiance of aspect born of the discovery that Chastener and Lover are one. Let us make haste, for They have the patterns of us there before them, and oh my brothers, but we are beautiful!

S.

Digitized by Google

THE LOGOS DOCTRINE

MANY of us believe that in every cycle some aspects of the Wisdom Religion are made manifest to the outer world, and that the present theosophical movement represents such an unfolding of inner truth. But it is so difficult, when one is in the midst of being changed, to reflect at all on that into which one is being changed. Indeed, we cannot be expected to have a definite idea of the goal which the Law has set for us, because how can we know that which we have not seen? We can help the Law, however, to guide us to our appointed ends, if we sense the direction in which we are going, if we anticipate a little to-day what may be expected of us to-morrow, if we see ahead to the next bend in the stream.

We may find much help in our effort to co-operate with the Law, if we study the modes of revelation of the Wisdom Religion in the past. For, though the content of one revelation may differ from another, the purpose underlying all revelations is one and the same, expressing itself ever more fully according to a rhythmic law. Every successive manifestation of the Logos, from this point of view, is only a clearer manifestation of what has already been.

The history of the Logos Doctrine, as modified by Greek philosophy and by the life of Christ, is the history of an older Theosophical Movement, which realized its purpose and—so far as could be—was complete. Can that history cast any light on the meanings latent in the present movement, still so far from complete?

Heraclitus of Ephesus (576-480 B.C.) seems to have been the first to use the Greek word, "Logos," to denote the "Word" or "Mind" of God. The idea, which he thus expressed, came to him most probably from the Egyptian Lodge. But, whether he knew the fuller implications of the Logos Doctrine or not, Heraclitus limited severely his public revelation of it. The Greeks of his time needed a moral and intellectual control, and to the redoubtable task of supplying this, the early sages set themselves. That age, so different outwardly from the modern world, was not so different inwardly as one might imagine. Religion had ceased to operate as a check on men's passions, for what sanction could self-control find from the "gods" of Olympus? The Greeks were developing physically and mentally, but deteriorating morally.

Addressing the intellects of their hearers, the sages informed them of a Law, above gods and men, which judged the activities of all creatures and ruled supreme, giving to all things their dues. From this Law proceeded the creation, order, processes and death of the world, both in its entirety and in its minutest part. The study of the Law, in relation to things, was called physics; in relation to men's actions, that study was called ethics, and the Law itself was named Nemesis.

Digitized by Google

It appears that there was an increasing consciousness of the reality of the all-controlling Law, during that time, and that this consciousness took one form in the adoration of the beautiful. It was through the love of form and beauty, that a mould was prepared to receive a new revelation and a new appeal. Pythagoras and Plato showed, behind the mortal and imperfect forms of earthly beauty, a world of immortal and absolute loveliness. The effort of man to realize the beautiful on earth was in reality the effort of the soul to disentangle itself from the matter of illusion and to return to the real world, from which it had fallen in the beginning. Thus, to the aspect of Law, which the first sages had revealed as pertaining to the Logos, was added the aspect of Beauty, of Perfection, as of the Model, to which the universe of souls should conform.

But was there any possible reconciliation between the two Aspects? Is the nature of things one with their proper goal? Does Providence exist?

It is the contribution of Philo Judæus (20 B.C.-54 A.D.) that he answered those questions affirmatively and more clearly than his predecessors; so that, when St. Paul undertook to illumine the life of Christ, he found an adequate intellectual atmosphere prepared for him. Philo said that Life was the reconciling term, that the Logos was not merely the impersonal Law and Model for life, but was Itself alive in the souls of all beings. By aspiration the soul could set in movement all the force of the Law to bring it to realize the ideal set for it high in the heavens; nay, more, the Law itself existed only to awaken in the soul that aspiration, which is the birth into the greater Life.

Christ, the Master, lived what Philo taught. The Logos made itself manifest at last, not through philosophy or art or science, but through a living man, born mortal and imperfect, who achieved immortality and perfection.

But the early Christians lost sight too soon of this crown of the Doctrine, that above all other attributes it was a *life*. The sophistries of the dying Græco-Roman world were too contagious. Theologians turned to the intellectual background and lost sight of the central figure of the living Master standing before them. Thus, instead of subjecting the intellect to the life, they enthroned the intellect and denied the life. They made the fundamental error of trying to separate the foundation-stones of the temple from the temple itself, with the result that at last the whole building fell upon their heads.

Once more divine hands are helping to rebuild the temple. They must use the same stones—the minds and souls of men. But—what is of the greatest significance in the present connection—they are placing the stones, I think, one upon another in the same order as of old. To a world whose religion had become stale and whose intellectual power was in unchecked momentum, the Lodge, through The Theosophical Society, offered a philosophy teaching the omnipresence of a spiritual Law, supreme above all the laws of nature, and operative in the human or

Digitized by Google

moral sphere quite as surely as in the physical. The clouds were lifted long enough from the divine reality above and around us, for us to glimpse a little of the splendour and power of the Masters, the Models which human souls are destined to become. The *way* to realize that destiny has been shown through the *life* of devotion and aspiration and love.

Success or failure rests with us. We must not allow the intellectual *mise en scène* to fascinate us, for all this exists only to help us to learn to live the life of discipleship. When once more an Avatar will fulfil his mission among men, let it not be said of him that his work had to be done by him all alone! Let us commence to work for him *now*.

STANLEY V. LADOW.

There is a wide difference between that sweetness of devotion which we desire because it is agreeable, and that resolution of heart which we ought to desire because it renders us true servants of God.—SPIRITUAL LETTERS OF S. FRANCIS DE SALES.

Digitized by Google

BY THE MASTER

ISHA UPANISHAD

TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT WITH AN INTERPRETATION

III

By a veil as of gold, the face of the Real is hidden. O thou Shepherd of the flock, Lord of the sun, lift up that veil, for the vision of the law of the Real!

THIS is the veil of Maya, the world illusion, the world glamour. What in essence is that veil?

Let us begin with simple illustrations. We have used the word "glamour," which is the old English name of the power used by a sorcerer or witch, whether for self-concealment or to deceive in other ways; the power thus defined by the dictionary: "A magical deception of the eyes, making things appear different from what they are."

This is the power commonly known in our day as hypnotism, whereby the subject of hypnotic influence, for example, sees an onion as an apple, or takes vinegar for wine. All exercises of hypnotic power are dependent on glamour, and are, therefore, forms of sorcery and witchcraft. Our self-styled scientific age has simply changed the name, while using the same power.

This leads one naturally to self-hypnotism, which our age recognizes as a reality, though it is far indeed from realizing its scope. Self-hypnotism through the influence of desire is, indeed, fairly well understood, at least when it is operative in others; but the far more subtle self-hypnotism through the lower mind has a reach which is still almost unsuspected.

In these interpretations, we have spoken of Bergson, and of his penetrating analysis of the lower mind, as the instrument which the Life has called into being and developed, in order to deal with the material world; and the most valuable part of Bergson's work is the detailed description of the way in which the mind-machine distorts reality, in order thus to deal with it practically. Over against the mind-machine Bergson sets intuition, the power which, being a part of the Life itself, directly lays hold of the Life, and apprehends the Life as it is.

But, as we have suggested before, Bergson seems not to get at the heart of the matter, because he is inclined to consider rather the mental operation of the lower nature, without going deeply into its moral operation.

Digitized by Google

The mind-machine is, it is true, moulded and adapted to dealing with material facts, with the whole order of the material world. But Bergson passes lightly over the force, the impulse which has forced the Life in this direction, and has kept it thus bent upon the material world: the force of desire, the force called by the Buddhists "thirst," or "lust," in the general sense, as in the phrase "the lust of the eyes."

Speaking generally, then, the impelling force is the desire of the personal self, the personality, for all those things which gratify its thirst. And all these desires ultimately rest upon the lower self's desire of life, the desire to be keenly and vividly conscious of its own separate existence; a brute instinct, unreasoning, headstrong, for its own perpetuation.

And this strong brute instinct continues, having, in a sense, an existence of its own, even after considerable development of the better and more humane, because more spiritual, nature has been attained. Besides the man's truer and deeper consciousness, with its aspiration and compassion, there lingers this submerged life, desperately fighting for its own perpetuation; alert, tricky, fruitful in expedients, endlessly resourceful, and quite determined to thwart any change or development which threatens its own lease of life. This is the passional element in the lower nature, which Bergson might have analyzed and set forth to view, had he been less exclusively interested in the mental and theoretical view of life, and more interested in the practical and spiritual.

The lower personal life, the egotism, that which is often called the "personality," though this word later comes to have a better and higher meaning, has a powerful life and obstinate purposes of its own; it is, in a sense, an invader, a traitor in the camp, or, quite literally, an obsessing force, an evil spirit, to use the term of an older and simpler day.

But it is a part of the resourceful and subtle strategy of this obsessing egotism, that it largely keeps itself in hiding; lurking, as it were, below the margin of ordinary consciousness, and, from this hiding place, warping both understanding and will, for its own purposes—for the perpetuation of that low order of life and consciousness in which it can luxuriate and grow fat.

Two things, which are in reality but two aspects of the same thing, namely, spiritual vision and sacrifice, directly cut at the root of the egotism's life, threatening to draw the Life upward beyond the low level on which the egotism flourishes. Therefore the egotism is ceaselessly at war with these two things. It is the deadly enemy of spiritual vision, and of the aspiration which foreshadows spiritual vision; and therefore it ceaselessly seeks to drug and benumb the mental powers, in order to blind them to spiritual reality.

All doctrines of materialism, without any exception whatever, are due to the wakeful activity of this skilful stage-manager, who sets the scenery while himself keeping out of sight.

These doctrines of the negation of spiritual things have their ultimate root, not in some mental shortcoming or even perversity, but rather

Digitized by Google

in a certain moral obliquity, in the prompting of the hidden demon who lurks in the darkness, until he is finally dragged forth into the light. Then begins a life and death struggle, which is the real drama of the soul, the theme of all mystical and religious books.

It is just because they are fighting an enemy now fully seen, that the saints recognize themselves to be "the chief of sinners." They have, through aspiration and sacrifice, stripped off the veil of this evil power; they see it in its hideousness, as it really is. And seeing, they know that they must fight to the death, overcoming, lest they be overcome. And they also know that no power or resource within the limits of their own personalities can give them the victory; nothing but the divine power of the Spirit itself, the Saviour, the Redeemer.

The saints speak with horror and loathing of this demoniac power, so long hidden but at last revealed, because they clearly see that its purpose is the death of every element of spiritual life. It seeks, quite literally, to "kill the soul," in the words of this Upanishad. And they likewise know how powerful it is, how subtle; its subtlety shown most of all in the way in which it remains concealed. Though obsessing the greater part of human life, it remains largely unsuspected, frankly disbelieved in by most people, and itself prompting that disbelief. It is well said that the devil's greatest triumph is to persuade people that there is no devil. Be it noted, by the way, that he generally persuades the same people that there is no God either, in the practical sense of a King requiring sacrifice and obedience.

The personality, in the sense we have given it, is "the veil of Maya"; that which conceals Truth, as with the lure of gold.

Who, then, is he who is to raise the veil? The name given in this Drama of the Mysteries is that of a Vedic deity, who is both a Shepherd of flocks and a Sun divinity, a Lord and Giver of Light.

The Good Shepherd, the Lord and Giver of Light—the symbolism is universal and old as life itself. That Lord and Shepherd is the Master who initiates the disciple, leading the disciple, by painful ways of sacrifice and purification, out of darkness into light, from beneath the yoke of evil into the liberty of the sons of God.

This intensely practical task is the essence and subject matter of all religion. When it is undertaken with full understanding and consciousness, it leads to full discipleship, and, in due time, to the Great Initiation, which is the subject of this Upanishad.

Therefore the Good Shepherd, the Lord and Giver of Light, is invoked, to lift the glistering veil, to give the vision of the Eternal.

Shepherd and Lord of Light, thou Only Seer, Lord of Death, Light-Giver, Son of the Lord of Life, send forth thy rays and bring them together!

That radiance of thine, thy form most beautiful I behold; the Spiritual Man in the real world. That am I!

Digitized by Google

This marks the consummation of the Great Initiation, the full vision of Divinity, wherein the consciousness of the disciple becomes one with the consciousness of the Master, and of that Master's Master and the whole ascending chain of Spiritual Life, up to and including the supreme Nirvana.

Then follows the transformation spoken of in that most mystical tract, *The Elixir of Life,* which is thus indicated in this Upanishad:

My Spirit enters the Spirit, the Immortal. And this body has its end in ashes.

There remain only the closing words, addressed to the new-born spiritual man:

O Sacrifice, remember! Remember what has been done! O Sacrifice, remember! Remember what has been done!

O Divine Fire, lead us by the good path to Victory! O Bright One, thou who knowest all wisdoms!

Give us victory over our consuming sin! To Thee we offer the highest word of praise!

Everywhere and at all times it is in thy power to acquiesce in thy present condition, and to behave justly to those who are about thee.— MARCUS ANTONINUS.

Digitized by Google

THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM

THERE is a problem in life—a marvellous and most important one—which seekers of truth ought to contemplate daily, not only till it is fairly well understood, but till it has made them eagerly anxious to make the wisdom it unveils to them a living power in their lives. In "The Two Paths" this problem is mentioned in the following way: "Alas, Alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them."

From a Christian point of view I venture to phrase this clause thus: "Alas, Alas, that all men should possess the Spirit of God, be one with the omnipresent Deity, and that possessing it, God should avail them so little."

This complaint reverberates through all nature. It is secretly expressed in every sound, in every movement of things that move, nay even in the stern silence of the immovable rock. Why is it that the omnipresent Deity is not felt in the heart of man? God must be there, since no place, no spot, not a single atom can be without that which is omnipresent. The reason is that He is there as a latent potency only, as a power at rest. He is there in His own state of being, unrevealed as before the beginning of the present period of cosmic activity; and in that state man knows Him not, in spite of all that has been said, heard, read, or learned by heart about Him. We are unconscious of that which is not manifest, and what we are unconscious of, is non-existent to us. God is a thought-form only, used as an ornament in our lives, and when we are praying to God we are but praying to this ornament, unless the Deity has been brought to reveal Itself in our heart, to some extent, thus making it possible for us to have some rare glimpses of Its glorious nature.

But God must be manifest in man. This is, in fact, the purpose of life.

In what way, then, can this be done? Is it something that occurs spontaneously without our co-operation or will? If so, then the gift of free will is not a blessing, but a malignant trap only, set up by an evil spirit for the purpose of tormenting man.

But fortunately it is not so. Man has free will as a remedy for his salvation. It is the only remedy that can further his development from his original animal state to that of a self-conscious human being, and then to a divine being that has become one with the Father in Heaven. In order to become a God, he must learn to discern between good and evil, between morality and immorality, between the immortal and the mortal. And he must learn to choose, of his own free will, between these two opposite sides of life. His free will puts him on a higher level than the animal, which acts according to natural instinct and without

Digitized by Google

discernment between good and evil. On the scale of evolution man stands between God and the animal, and of his own free will he can raise himself or sink,—raise himself to the Kingdom of God, or sink back into the animal kingdom for an Eternity;—in due time (in another evolutionary period) to scale again the steep ladder that leads from the animal state to the human state, and then to the blessed state of the immortal.

Man has got free will for his birthright, but the power to discern right and wrong must be developed and made perfect. If he chooses right he becomes a co-worker with nature and the law of evolution, and he will reap strength, happiness and peace. If he makes mistakes the Law will oppose him and put him to rights. It will be the schoolmaster that brings him to Christ. And the Law is a teacher whose instruction is based on right principles. Therefore, man, the pupil, is brought to learn with his own brain, of his own experience, that which is to be learnt. He must raise his whole nature with an effort of his own. This does not mean that man, as he generally thinks himself to be, viz., a being that is under the authority of his brain-consciousness, can do this, because this authority is the mind governed by desire and therefore weak, unstable and not reliable. But there is a higher authority in man than the consciousness of the brain. There is the soul that is a spark of the Universal Soul, the Father in Heaven. And through his soul man is a child of this Father, and as long as he has not forfeited his sonship, he can appeal to his Father for help. And help is never denied him that worships in spirit and in truth.

In what way, then, can man be a co-worker with the evolutionary law in order to develop his nature from its present low state to the state of a divine being, thus making God manifest in his life? Or to put it differently: How must he direct his aspiration and effort, and use his will, in order to raise himself to the Kingdom of God and become conscious of his union with the Father in Heaven?

In the excellent scripture, the *Bhagavad Gita,* this question is answered to such an extent that the possibility of being doubtful seems precluded. But as Christians we ought to find an answer in our own religion, in the Gospel of Love brought to the Western people by our Master, Jesus the Christ. A few quotations from the sayings of this Master will suffice. He said: "I am the way," . . . "No man can come to the Father except by the Son." From this it is evident that access to the Father and His Kingdom can only be obtained by being a follower of Christ, or by becoming His disciple. Christ is the way for the Christian, as Krishna is the way for many Hindus. The essential thing is, therefore, to find out what discipleship means, what its rules are, and then to comply with them. On this head the Master has spoken very clearly. These are His words: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple," . . . . "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed," . . . . "I have given an example,"

Digitized by Google

. . . . "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." These are plain words. Discipleship means that we must bear our cross, and accept our circumstances in this world without complaint or reluctance, always striving to keep His word, to follow His example, to learn from Him to be meek and lowly in heart, and to be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect. This means an entire change of life,—not a change of circumstances, or to run away from our duty here and now, but a change of our inner attitude to the things of this world, and to things divine as well. We must learn to meet the circumstances and events of this life as something sent us from above for our schooling, and as a help in our efforts to raise ourselves from our present low state as mortals to the divine state of immortals. And we must learn to pray with a cheerful mind: "Not my will but thine,"—knowing that nothing can happen against the will of the heavenly Father, and that all must be for the best, since it is the eternal Law of Compassion and Righteousness that governs our lives both in this world and the next. It is only our ignorance about the great need of our souls, and our lack of faith and love, that make us accept so many of the blessings of our heavenly Father with bad grace and even with obstinacy. We must learn obedience, and obedience will strengthen our love. If only we will study life, as it is, we shall see that there can be no true love without obedience, or the will to give one's life for the beloved one, and to serve and defend him. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,"—said the Christian Master. And this is not an obedience forced upon us; nor do we obey from fear, or reluctantly as a slave, but of free will governed by love. We are, in truth, obedient to the highest biddings of our own hearts. We are following the example of the Master who gave his life for all, and whose meat it was to do the will of the Father. We are bearing our cross, continuing in the Master's words, and striving to be perfect as the Father in Heaven is perfect. Then we shall have become disciples or true followers of Christ.

Another distinctive feature of the disciple's life must be mentioned, because true discipleship is impossible without it. He must acquire the power of *continual meditation*. The meaning of this has often been expounded in a most explicit way. At the present time, however, when discipleship has become the most vital thing in the life of a Christian, it seems wise again and again to point out the real meaning of it.

Continual meditation is a life not made up of scattered moments of life, but a life that is unbroken in its continuity. And human life is consciousness combined with reason and will. And since it is only when we are conscious of a thing that it really exists for us, it is evident that if we are not conscious of the presence of God in our inner life, then He has no reality for us, though He abides there as He does everywhere else. We may talk of God because we have been taught so much about Him. We may think that we know much about Him from what we see in the nature of the world and read in its history. But this is intellectual knowl-

Digitized by Google

edge only. Many of us may firmly believe in His existence, because to us He is a logical necessity, and because so many have borne strong witness about Him. But this is not the same as being conscious of Him. To us He is still but a thought-form, a fine ornament. Christ is still an outer ideal and not an inner reality, which He must be. It is only when we begin to be conscious of His presence in our inner life that He gradually becomes something real to us. It is only then that Christ and the Father have come and made their abode with us. And here some quotations from the sayings of St. Paul and St. John may be helpful: "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "Know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you?" Thus speaks St. Paul, and St. John says: "And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Therefore, as long as we do not keep the commandments of God, we cannot in truth say that God is in us as an active power, though He is there as a power at rest, or, let us hope, as the power in the little leaven that in time will leaven our whole inner and outer lives.

How, then, shall we gain this consciousness of God?

We must begin to practise the presence of God, which means to practise the presence of Christ, our Master; for Christ has said: "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And this must be taken literally. Not that we shall see Him with our physical eyes, but with the eyes of the developed spiritual man. We must try to feel that the Master is present in our inner life, not only for short intervals when we are absorbed in prayer or meditation, but continually. We must imagine Him to be there always, taking part in our doings, always watching, guiding, repairing,—that He upholds us every minute with His tender love and compassion.

To begin with, we must hold this attitude of mind at certain times a day, for instance, when rising in the morning, in the middle of the day, and before going to bed at night. And on certain days, especially on Sundays in church or at home, we must try to make this time for prayer and meditation longer and more effective by giving ourselves to the Master with profound thankfulness and devotion. At first we shall find this practice very difficult, and it will claim all our strength and resoluteness to carry it out to some small extent only. We shall find that we fail continually, and we may feel discouraged and lose faith in ourselves; and perhaps shortly all is given up, and we rush back to the world and are again shackled with the chains that had already begun to loosen, or were partly fallen. But if we really desire to be disciples of the Master, we shall persevere even if our efforts seem utterly in vain. And it will not be long before we shall experience the blessing of the practice. What at first seemed so difficult, and so objectionable to our lower nature, will gradually become easy and pleasant. This practice will

Digitized by Google

grow into a habit, and we shall come to love it; and what we love we are always going back to in our thought and feelings. We shall find ourselves able to extend our consciousness of the Master's presence, first, to frequently recurring times, then to every hour, to every minute and while doing all kinds of work. We shall come to think of Him as always standing by, controlling and inspiring us to do the will of the Father. And finally we shall recognize Him in our inner life, not only as a vague idea, but as an ever-present reality. Then we have found our Master, have become one with Him, and He will bring us to the Father. Then the principal problem of life has been solved.

There is no reason for us to feel discouraged, or to fear that we shall fall short of the goal. The Divine Law of evolution will in time bring us there. But it depends on us whether our journey along the evolutionary stream, from our present stage onward, shall be short and pleasant, or long, wearisome and full of pain. But it must be remembered that the conscious presence of the Master is the life of the new man which, according to St. Paul, "after God, hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." And it must also be remembered that the new man has his fœtal state, and develops in a similar way to that of a physical embryo from within without, although on a higher scale of evolution. And after the fœtal state comes the childhood. From a spiritual point of view few people are yet above the state of childhood, and how many are even born again, or have left the fœtal state? And as the physical embryo, as well as the physical child, can die when unfavourable circumstances set in, so adverse circumstances can bring the new man to perish in his fœtal state, or later, when still a child. And we are creating adverse circumstances whenever our free will jars against the will of God, though, as a rule, not unfavourable enough to kill, fortunately. But if they kill, then that personality is thrown off from the evolutionary stream as waste for an eternity, or until another period of cosmic activity.

As the life of the animal man must be kept up and strengthened with proper food and exercise, so the man of the second birth, must be nourished and trained properly. Christ has pointed out the proper food when saying: "My meat is to do the will of the Father." Thus, whenever we are doing the will of the Father, we are feeding the man who is to be the perfect man. And in order to attain to this state, we have to be trained and taught by the Master while we are in the physical world, the boarding-school of the new man in his younger days, or till he has attained "unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," as St. Paul has said. When this is accomplished, the purpose of life has been fulfilled, and man has become more than man.

THOMAS H. KNOFF.

Digitized by Google

SUFIISM

II

EMERSON speaks of the poet as one who "sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and is representative of man, in virtue of being the largest power to receive and to impart." These words, particularly the last phrase, seem applicable with regard to the Sufi poets of Persia, for, after the lapse of centuries and the accompanying decline of Sufiism, there is nothing to-day so representative of the teaching, nor so much a power to impart it, as the work of certain of the great Persian poets. A number of the greatest among these were Sufis, and it naturally follows that some of the finest expressions of Sufiism were in verse. So far as they are accessible then—for translations are comparatively few—the work of these poets may afford a fairly complete understanding of what Sufiism really was and of what it stood for.

For this purpose, no better example could be found than Jalálu'd-Din-Rumi, who has been termed the greatest mystical poet of any age. Jalal was born at Balkh, in Persia, in 1207. At that period in Europe, Innocent III was conducting the numerous Crusades against the infidel abroad and the heretic at home, and Saint Francis of Assisi was calling his people to a new love of God—though these facts, since the cyclic law in the orient probably operates differently from our own, need convey no special significance, serving merely to link less familiar with more familiar events. The father of the poet was a professor and a preacher, a man of great learning, who for political reasons moved to Bagdad shortly after the birth of his son and just before the destruction of Balkh by Genghis Khan who, with his Mongol hordes, was then laying waste all Asia. For a considerable time the family moved from place to place, remaining several years in Mecca, Damascus and elsewhere, and finally settling in Iconium. Here, on the death of his father, Jalal succeeded to his professorial duties. He had possessed unusual ability from early youth, was a man of brilliant attainments, and drew pupils from far and near, having about four hundred in attendance on his instruction.

Such was his life when, in 1244, there appeared a dervish, Shamsu'ddin or Shamsi Tabriz—a great Sufi teacher—sent in turn, according to some accounts, by his teacher, to seek out Jalal who, it had been revealed to him, would be a great Sufi. Partly, no doubt, because of lack of accurate information and partly because of the oriental flavour—the atmosphere that we are all familiar with in the Arabian Nights—Shamsu'ddin is represented as a weird and mysterious figure clad in black felt and wearing a peculiar cap—the subject of numerous though rather vague legendary accounts. By some he has been compared to Socrates, chiefly because, while more or less illiterate himself, he had the power to draw to him men of rare gifts, even of genius, through whom

Digitized by Google

his message could be given to the world. He was a man of great power, eloquence and magnetism; also a man of great spirituality. Jalal was quick to recognize his spiritual greatness; at once gave himself completely to his teaching, and the two withdrew for a time to the solitude of the desert.

Curiously enough, Jalal's response to his master's call roused no kindred feeling among his friends and pupils, but inspired in them —perhaps because of certain antagonistic qualities in the master, perhaps for other reasons—only wrath and resentment. Their teacher they regarded as mad, for a time, and their ill treatment, either actual or threatened, of Shamsu'ddin, resulted in his sudden flight to Tabriz. Jalal immediately followed and brought him back. A repetition of the expressions of ill-will which was shared by the populace as well, caused a second flight and, this time, a two years' sojourn in Damascus. Again he was induced to return. But he was not to dwell in Iconium unmolested, and in a short time he died a violent death,—long and deeply mourned by Jalal, who wrote in his honour one of his most exquisite lyrical poems, and instituted the dance of the Order of Mevlevi dervishes.

Probably the most noted of the works of Jalal is his *Masnavi,* an epic poem which has been styled the "sacred book of Sufiism." Translators of Persian poems warn the reader of the difficulty, almost the impossibility of preserving in their work the true flavour of the original. We all know how much may be lost, what a pale reflection may result, in making a simple translation say from French into English. In an oriental tongue the difficulty is infinitely greater. The orient deals with a world of ideas with which the occidental mind is wholly unfamiliar; modes of thought, laws of esthetics, rules of rhetoric, all may be totally different from ours, or, if similar, then employed with a different significance. The poetic value and beauty of the *Masnavi* in the original are attested beyond all question, but it is one of the works in which the difficulties of translation are obvious. It is enigmatic and ambiguous; full of subtleties of thought and obscurities of expression. It is not, as might be expected, a *treatise* on Sufiism. Instead, it is a collection of ethical teachings, allegories, interpretations of Koranic texts, wise counsels given in various forms and all strung loosely together, without any methodical progression of thought. Yet, with all its peculiarities of style and form, there is not a page that does not repay whatever effort the reading may involve, for its truths are universal. The author is a student of life, and the lessons he teaches are lessons that each reader, oriental and occidental alike, can apply with profit to his own everyday difficulties. The absurdity and the evil of servile imitation; the necessity of rooting up bad habits while they are new; the futility of seeking in mere outer form the "fruit and produce of the tree of spirituality"; the need of finding a touchstone to distinguish the counterfeit from the true gold in daily life, where we, every one of us, are seekers after gold,—these and many another truth are taught in simple allegory, often in the current phraseology of the day.

One such story may be given, not merely as an illustration, but also

Digitized by Google

because of the aptness of its lesson. A shepherd was praising God in his simple way, saying, "O God, O God! Where are you that I may become your servant; . . . that I may kiss your little hands, and rub your little feet, and when the time of sleeping comes I may sweep out your little room,—O You for whom all my goats be sacrificed!" Moses, who stood nearby, was stern in his rebuke, declaring that such blasphemy had "turned the brocade of religion into old rags." And the shepherd tore his garments and departed, repenting, into the desert. But God was displeased with Moses and said:

"You have separated my slave from me.

"Have you been sent in order to unite, or have you been sent in order to separate? . . .

"I have put in every one a particular character; I have given to every one a particular mode of expression.

"From him it is praise, but from you it would be blame; from him it is honey, but from you it would be poison. . . .

"I do not become pure through their ascription of praise; it is they who become pure and scatterers of pearls.

"I do not look at the tongue or speech; I look at the soul and condition.

"I inspect the heart as to whether it be humble; though the speaking of the words be not humble. . . .

"Enough of these words, conceptions, and figurative expressions! I wish for ardour, ardour! Content yourself with this ardour!

"Light up the fire of love in your soul, and burn entirely thought and expression."

Following close, however, on the simplicity of lines like these, may come obscurities such as the following: "Do not flee to the six-sides, because in sides there is the station of the six valleys, and that station is check-mate, check-mate." Or,—"Dust be on the head of the bone which prevents the dog from hunting the rational soul."

The first of these means, briefly, that the material world should be abandoned for the spiritual world; and the second concerns the Sufi teaching of the "carnal soul" (here termed the dog), which may incline toward earthly things, the things of the body (the bone) or, by discipline and religious exercise, may lift itself up and become one with the "rational soul."

Again there are occasional lines which show the author in his true guise of mystical poet, and in his

"Except at night the Moon has no effulgence. Seek not the Heart's Desire except through heart's pain,"—

we have the oriental counterpart of the Christian mystic's certainty that there can be no love without suffering and that the Master draws nearest in the dark hour of trial.

Lines like these suggest that lyric already mentioned, for which the poet is justly noted, namely, the *Divani Shamsi Tabriz*, written partly in

Digitized by Google

memory of the teacher, and altogether as a tribute to him. "In the Divani," says one commentator, "we have the poet with his singing robes about him." Truly we have that and much more, for the poem is an exquisite expression of the message of Sufiism, written in the language of love—of the lover and the Beloved. It is the speech of one who has tasted of communion and would call others to that joy.

"I cried out at midnight, 'Who is in this house of the heart?'
He said, ' 'Tis I, by whose countenance moon and sun are shamed.'
He said, 'Why is this house of the heart filled with diverse images?'
Said I, 'They are the reflection of thee, O thou whose face is a candle of Chigil.'
He said, 'What is this other image, bedabbled with heart's blood?'
Said I, 'This is the image of me, heartsore and with feet in the mire.'
I bound the neck of my soul and brought it to him as a token:
'It is the confidant of love; do not sacrifice thine own confidant.' "

To quote at too great length would, of course, be a mistake, yet how, but in his own words, give the urge of his plea that we leave the "world of severance" where the "earthly flame has entrapped us" and, listening to the voice of Love, seek the world of union:

"Oh how long shall we, like children, in the earthly sphere
Fill our lap with dust and stones and sherds?
Let us give up the earth and fly heavenwards,
Let us flee from childhood to the banquet of men. . . .
A voice came to the spirit, 'Spirit thee away to the Unseen,
Take the gain and the treasure and lament the pain no more.' "

This, perhaps, is the message of Sufiism,—take the gain and the treasure, and lament the pain no more. And it is a message not only for the men of an earlier day, but for each and every one in our own day, who can hear and comprehend. As compared with the commonplace world of care and weariness, loneliness and misunderstanding in which the vast majority now live, what a new world it opens up. What perfection of understanding and sympathy, what intimacy of devotion, what generous outpouring of love, love given and love received—the complete fulfilment of all that many a human heart so longs for. And the Beloved, the Master, is calling his children now, as he has called through the centuries,

"Come, come, for you will not find another friend like me.
Where indeed is a beloved like me in all the world.
Come, come, and do not spend your life in wandering to and fro,
Since there is no market elsewhere for your money.
You are as a dry valley and I as the rain,
You are as a ruined city and I as the architect.
Except my service, which is joy's sunrise,
Man never has felt and never will feel an impression of joy."

J. C.

Digitized by Google

STUDYING LIGHT ON THE PATH

IN OUR Branch we had not read *Light on the Path* together for a great many years. Of course we studied it individually, but some of us had had experiences with its uncompromising revelations and demands which made us wary of any united effort to probe into its teachings. Here is a typical case. Several of us were reading and discussing the book; we were all new students, all trying to orient ourselves, and not in the least confident, at any moment, whether we were standing in the shoals of the "ocean of Theosophy," or rapidly being carried out to sea by its unseen currents, of which, if the truth were told, we were all secretly much afraid.

With all those conflicting notions shut up, out of sight, in some very stupid, commonplace looking exteriors, a few of us took up *Light on the Path,* because of the promise held out by its title. The text itself seemed to us an odd way of stating the facts of life, as we had come to know them—we wished, some of us, that we could invite the author of the book to attend one of our little gatherings; his point of view was so original that we should have liked to hear his phrasing of the more modern problems with which we each had to deal.

Suddenly one day, the most interesting and constructive member of our coterie announced that he did not care to go on with the reading, but that he would be delighted to join us later when we took up some other book, especially if it were some modern treatise on philosophy. There was consternation, because this man's reading of our text had been so discriminating, had shown such insight, that we were all greatly indebted to him; we felt that we could not afford to lose his contributions to our discussions. Pressed for some account of his sudden loss of interest, he first fenced, and then said, bluntly,—"This is all for me; I have had enough. The teaching is plain—do this and that, and you will get access to more light. It is, I am convinced, the light for which I have been looking, but the fact is that I am not willing to pay the price indicated; there are other things that I want to enjoy. I find that I cannot reconcile myself to doing without them, just yet. Later, I hope I shall strike this road again, but as long as I want what lies in the fields beside it there is no use in continuing to think about what is down the road, for I am not going there." The rest of us either thought he was giving a clever description of how it feels to be bored, or else envied his vision of what was demanded in order to get light. To us it was by no means clear what the price might be; we wanted to find out. Yet somehow that episode broke up our impromptu gatherings; and later some of us began to wonder whether he who had rejected the truth had not understood it better, had not really paid it higher tribute, than the rest of us who went blundering on, working at it now and then, trying half-heartedly to understand what it was all about.

Digitized by Google

It was years later—one dislikes to count up their number—that we again felt an inner urging to get below the surface of the same little book. Our friend had not yet exhausted the allurements of the worldly life to which he had given himself, but it had become "dust and ashes," and we were beginning to look for his return. Where would he find us? What had we learned? We decided to find out. We read three or four pages, slowly, taking a number of evenings for it, and we had a good time together,—bringing to the common store what we could from our reading and living. At the close of the evening we were often left with a very pleasant sense of having listened, and perhaps made some slight contribution to, interpretations of the text that went far below its surface and made connections with our everyday problems which we had not before suspected. Really we seemed to be making progress in finding out what the author meant us to learn from it.

Imagine our surprise when, in response to a kindly question from our Branch President about the progress of our studies, we heard one of our number say: "We are having such interesting meetings but I come away from them with a heavy heart." [A strange report to make, but we registered the intention to pay more heed to this member's comments or questions, and so to be more helpful in the future.] "Heavy with so much learning?" was our President's chaffing response. "Do they," glancing at the rest of us, "give you *no* chance to unload any of it?" "Yes, every chance," our comrade replied, "and a great deal is said that I should never have dug out for myself;—still, my heart is heavy. I suppose I had expected to get more than I was prepared to try to give. There is hardly a phrase in section one that I have not stood before, asked its meaning, and turned away with little more than the assurance that there was something very definite and practical for me behind it, something that I ought to be doing about it. Yes, there was more; the conviction that I should find the key that would unlock that treasure. And now we have gone past scores of those treasure carriers, and, grateful as I am for all the others have helped me to understand, I am in worse case than before—I have not found a single one of those desired keys, that is, I have not recognized them. My complaint is of my own stupidity, not of lack of help, which my fellows have always so generously given. Why, even the four unnumbered rules on page one—I might as well be wholly frank—are as much of a puzzle to me as they were the day I first read them. I do not yet know what the author, He from whose dictation they were 'written down,' meant me to take from them!"

That had been a long speech for this usually silent member, called out by a real desire. A plea for help was its undertone, and a response to it began to rise in our hearts, also. Yes, after all, what *did* those rules mean? A question from one or another of us started the President to thinking, then to an occasional provocative counter question—we were off! there was evidently going to be some real talk. That hope became a certainty when some of our other officers, who had been occupied with

Digitized by Google

special duties, felt the pull of the desire which was being expressed and joined in the conversation.

There was no one there to make such an accounting as the Recorder gives in "The Screen," of live conversations about real topics. Most of the things that were said will have their one and only chance for life and for creative potency in the hearts of the very small handful of students on whose ears, all too dull of hearing, they fell. Strange the prodigality in the spiritual world which far outdoes the so-called prodigality of nature—the profusion of seed sown, lavishly, upon the miry clay of minds too absorbed in self even to welcome the seed, and to try, as the responsive earth always does, to give it a chance to grow. Much was explained, much suggested, as the result of long and devoted study of *Light on the Path*. It was given in brilliant conversation, not in didactic monologue, but that is the only form in which it seems possible to attempt even a partial transcription of what one of the students carried away from that memorable "chance" conversation:

You are wondering about the "real meaning" of the first unnumbered rule—"Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears." Do you not think it is always better, especially when reading a book that deals with real things, to make it one's first object to pay due heed to what the author says, to follow the unfoldment of his thought with as much attention and understanding as one can command? Too often when we read books we simply use what the writer has said to confirm our own views or misconceptions, paying him the scant courtesy of passing over what he has wished to communicate, and fastening our thought only on the support that some statements of his, often quite incidental to his main theme, may appear to give to theories of our own. So we come away from the reading of him poorer than before, not richer,—because we took nothing except chaff with which to feed our vanity and our opinionatedness.

This is not a book to be read in that way. The older members of the T.S. had one great advantage. In the beginning there were few books and magazines to read, and we had to dig deep into those given us. We studied, we worked over them desperately, determined to extract their truth; for there was upon us the constant sense that we must get our clues, must find the way and traverse it steadily, or we should certainly be left behind, stranded. In those days we could not afford to read a sentence several times, wishing we knew what it meant, and then pass on to the next and the next. Some of us found it helpful to memorize the text, word for word, so that we had it at hand for constant reference and brooding. When our minds were thus filled with its phrases, in their setting, it often happened that one phrase of it would rush into view, throwing a flood of illumination upon the particular sentence over which we might be working at that time. Our anxiety to get to the heart of it was so great that we had to go at it steadily, wringing each phrase dry before passing on to the next—for who knew in which one our own special clue might not be lurking?

Digitized by Google

A friend who wished to take no chances of missing the way, gave months to the study of each rule—not a few hours every month to wondering what it meant or wishing for a revelation about it, but practical, experimental study, putting to the test of everyday life conclusions as to the meaning of the sentence selected; in other words, conducting life by that particular rule. It was applied, so far as understood, to the first incidents that occurred in the day. Perhaps they did not work out as was apparently intended. Why? What was faulty in the application of the maxim? What other meaning had it in this case, which should have been recognized? Maybe one was even in doubt as to whether a particular rule pointed in one direction or in the exact opposite—though that could seldom happen to one who was genuinely searching for guidance, since the spirit of the book is so clear that it could not frequently come to one to lose completely the sense of direction. However, even such perplexity would not long baffle a student who was earnestly pursuing the experimental method; his motto was—Try it out. Of course that student made mistakes; if he was very energetic he might have numberless mishaps and minor explosions; but he learned by each one. After each he performed a quick calculation as to where his reading of instructions had been wrong, made the evident corrections, and started again, not in the least disheartened by the fact that he had at last learned something, and not too much impressed by the resultant bruises.

You ask for an application of this principle of study to the first unnumbered rule. But we should have to go back of that, for it is not fair to assume that the first sentence of the text has been taken to heart,—"These rules are written for all disciples. Attend you to them." As Cavé recently* made so clear for us, one use of these rules is to teach us what discipleship means, what the life of a disciple is like. Let us apply that clue to the first unnumbered rule. Evidently we may assume that the disciple sees things which are not seen by the ordinary man. What are those things? Surely not spooks and shadowy half-beings that as yet have no foothold in either world. No, for we know that the closer the approach to the things of the inner world the more real they become. We are then *going away from* the world of illusion, of dense shadow, toward the concrete, toward a world where the acme of what we usually call common-sense is demanded; the furthest possible remove from sentimental vapourizing over interpretations of cloud effects.

Let us take as a working hypothesis the supposition that the disciple sees life as it really is, or to put that in other terms, sees it, so far as his rank permits, in the light of the Lodge. Do we see things that way? If we did, should we be in such constant perplexity as to what we ought to do in this or that case, even when we cannot discover within us any unwillingness to take whatever course of action would further the interests of that Brotherhood to which we are pledged? Why is our sleep so broken with the sickening fear that we shall have to give up something

* July, 1919 QUARTERLY, pages 78-80.

Digitized by Google

we prize, in order to take the next step forward on our road? Is that the way the Lodge sees life? And if we really wish to exchange such astigmatic vision as we now have for the clear sight of the disciple, we are told that our eyes must become incapable of tears. We hardly need to pause to ask whether this term "tears" is to be taken literally; experience has taught us that physical tears, like laughter, often only mask instead of expressing the inner state. The friend who most readily weeps over your misfortune has sometimes proved in the end the most unfeeling toward you. Evidently tears should be taken figuratively; let us see whether one meaning may not apply to the whole set of emotions that centre around self; that brood which includes self-will; self-love; self-pity; self-depreciation; self-reference. Take an everyday occurrence, and we shall see how this interpretation might be worked out.

It comes at the end of a trying day, when a man has been dealing with many perplexing problems, some of them baffling in themselves, some made so by the constant strife of the human elements involved. He has been struggling to keep hold on his own centre, and in spite of this maelstrom, to realize himself as an immortal soul standing in spiritual being. He has not been able to stand firm, but he has made a determined effort, looking anxiously toward the end of the day when he could get a cool draught of inspiration from his source of power and light. That time has come, but with it comes one of his fellows who, absorbed in the interests of his own day, pounces upon the weary one with some question or comment that serves to provoke the explosion which had been held off all day long. Cutting and perhaps unkind things are said. What happens then?

Would you be amazed if I were to say that the other man usually dissolves in a flood of tears? And yet, in the sense in which the term is used in our rule, is not that what we should all expect to see happen? The particular brand of tears which flow will depend largely upon the man's temperament. Perhaps he gets exasperated, but, while giving no outer sign of his feeling, tells himself that this is outrageous conduct on the other man's part; there he was, trying to share with him the fruit of the day's experience, speaking to him with complete courtesy, wishing him well in his heart—and now, how like a boor that man behaves! If there is to be any calling of names, this and this ought by rights to be said to him,—and the chances are that those things are soon and bitterly said. Clearly the one who was so betrayed by exasperation had first been blinded by the tears of personal feeling, so that for the time being he lost hold on the clear sight of his day. At the moment he is as blind as if he had never seen any of the realities of life, never gauged the relative values of personal feeling and unchanging truth.

Or we may suppose that the tears are of another kind. The one who happened to set off the gunpowder, gives way to hurt feelings under the other man's outburst; he thinks how many times he has tried to help that fellow in work that was pressing; how often he has supported his plans when others were not inclined to pay any attention to them; how

Digitized by Google

generous he has been in letting the other take all the credit for their common efforts; how much he has endured from this person in all the years past, recalling with the swiftness of the dream state every occasion when there had been the least friction between them, no matter how thoroughly cleared up at the time.

Or perhaps his tears flow in still another way. Maybe he has a little scrap of detachment and so recognized at the start that he had the misfortune to throw a lighted match onto the other's unguarded powder train; and naturally he would want to help the other man to make as quiet and honourable an exit as possible from the mess that explosion was making. So far, he is on good ground; then out gush the tears—he is not exasperated, his feelings are not hurt, but he says to himself,—This is too big a job for me; if only so and so were here to see what is the best way of handling this poor tired man! If I speak, it will simply give him further material for this outburst which he already is regretting more deeply than I feel my real sins; I want so to help him out; what shall I do? . . . By this time there are two people hopelessly blinded by the emotions which they have allowed to sweep them off their feet, and the powers that make for true vision and right human relations have no representative at that meeting place.

You ask what the disciple would do if the tired man exploded at him. Perhaps it would be only fair to say that such an explosion would not be as likely to occur in the presence of one who was really a disciple. O not in the least because that other would feel some sort of holy awe in his presence and manage to hold in the rising wrath. But because the disciple would be constantly watchful to weed out from his surroundings those feelings, thoughts, and attitudes of mind that necessarily jar upon others,—that is, his atmosphere would not be such as to provoke petty friction. He would also be constantly on guard. The appearance of another person instantly leads him to ask for what purpose that other was sent; he pays attention, almost automatically, to the state of mind and heart in which that other comes—he knows that he is held responsible for the effect that is produced upon that other, even in five minutes' casual conversation. In like manner, those of lesser degree might do well to ask themselves certain questions when they become innocent participators in such an episode as the one we have been using for illustration. These questions would not be in the line of trying to discover what is wrong with the offender—for the moment that is unimportant—but would involve a quick survey of one's own condition, the desire being to discover at once what there is *in me* that is causing my brother to offend; and the probe would go deeper than externals of manner, attitude, form of expression; would involve my condition of mind and heart, the centre from which I am viewing the misery of the man who is in the midst of his explosion.

What, you ask, is the disciple going to do with the exploder? How is he going to regard the situation? What will he see, having

Digitized by Google

attained the stage at which the eyes are incapable of tears? Is he therefore indifferent, far removed from the scene of the conflict, as we might be from participation in the struggles of an ant which was trying to carry a load much too cumbersome for it to manage? Certainly not; if that were his feeling he could not be a disciple. He sees (and this is only one way of stating it) that the better part of this man has temporarily lost control and is struggling to regain it, while the particular form taken by the outbreak has significance for him only as indicative of the point at which he might hope to be of some help. From long experience with himself and with others, he may form a quick and intuitive judgment as to the treatment which will best reinforce the efforts of the man's better nature. Dispassionately, but with burning desire to help one of his Master's struggling children, he would decide what line to take. It might be that he would not appear to notice the commotion but would speak with quiet confidence of some new phase in the work in which they were both interested. Or he might feel that overstrained nerves needed to be soothed by a friendly recognition of the condition, by the sense that the disciple, too, had known the need for such emotional relief. Or he might think the man needed to be brought sharply to his senses, needed the help of a direct demand upon his flagging will,—and so might tell him in a few short words how disagreeable he was making himself, emphasizing the simple statement by leaving him.

You say that you have not the wisdom to deal with another in this fashion, and you are right. The practical point, however, seems to be that you want to learn to use, in service, all the understanding that has been given you; want to see as truly as your imperfect vision will permit. Then you must look to the tears, first recognizing them for what they are, and then learning how to get them under control. You already know how often, as onlooker at a conference in which you had no interests or desires at stake, you have seen clearly the right course of action, to which the participants in the difficulty may have been wholly blind. For that moment tears were not blurring your vision. The next step is to learn to use your present vision as clearly, when all that you hold dear seems to be at stake. Yes, impartiality describes one angle of the attitude we must acquire; but a partisan desire that the will of Masters shall be done, that their cause shall be advanced through every incident of life, would be a form of statement more sympathetic to my own point of view.

This is only the beginning of what is suggested by that first unnumbered rule; you will discover far more about it as you work with it. One thing you may learn, as I have, is to be especially alert to the possible significance of the suggestions that do not at first appeal to you. We pass by so much that would give us the clues for which we are looking; it does not exactly accord with our mood of the moment, with our expectation of the form in which truth must appear. In other words, our ears are so sensitive to what accords with our own desires and wishes that they miss most of the teaching which they are meant to hear.

E.

Digitized by Google

"THE GATES OF GOLD"*

"When the strong man has crossed the threshold he speaks no more to those at the other (this) side. And even the words he utters when he is outside are so full of mystery, so veiled and profound, that only those who follow in his steps can see the light within them."—*Through the Gates of Gold*, p. 19.

HE fails to speak *when* he has crossed, because, if he did, they would neither hear nor understand him. All the language he can use when on this side is language based upon experience gained outside the Gates, and when he uses that language, it calls up in the minds of his hearers only the ideas corresponding to the plane they are on and experience they have undergone; for if he speaks of that kind of idea and experience which he has found on the other side, his hearers do not know what is beneath his words, and therefore his utterances seem profound. They are not veiled and profound because he wishes to be a mystic whose words no other can expound, but solely because of the necessities of the case. He is willing and anxious to tell all who wish to know, but cannot convey what he desires, and he is sometimes accused of being unnecessarily vague and misleading.

But there *are* some who pretend to have passed through these Gates and who utter mere nothings, mere juggles of words that cannot be understood because there is nothing behind them rooted in experience. Then the question arises, "How are we to distinguish between these two?"

There are two ways.

1. By having an immense erudition, a profound knowledge of the various and numberless utterances of those known Masters throughout the ages whose words are full of power. But this is obviously an immense and difficult task, one which involves years devoted to reading and a rarely-found retentiveness of memory. So it cannot be the one most useful to us. It is the path of mere book-knowledge.

2. The other mode is by testing those utterances by our intuition. There is scarcely any one who has not got an internal voice—a silent monitor—who, so to say, strikes within us the bell that corresponds to

* Reprinted from *The Path*, May, 1888.

Digitized by Google

truth, just as a piano's wires each report the vibrations peculiar to it, but not due to striking the wire itself. It is just as if we had within us a series of wires whose vibrations are all true, but which will not be vibrated except by those words and propositions which are in themselves true. So that false and pretending individual who speaks in veiled language only mere nothingness, will never vibrate within us those wires which correspond to truth. But when one who has been taken through these Gates speaks ordinary words really veiling grand ideas, then all the invisible wires within immediately vibrate in unison. The inner monitor has struck them, and we feel that what he has said is true, and whether we understand him or not, we feel the power of the vibration and the value of the words we have heard.

Many persons are inclined to doubt the existence in themselves of this intuition, who in fact possess it. It is a common heritage of man, and only needs unselfish effort to develop it. Many selfish men have it in their selfish lives; many a great financier and manager has it and exercises it. This is merely its lowest use and expression.

By constantly referring mentally all propositions to it and thus giving it an opportunity for growth, it will grow and speak soon with no uncertain tones. This is what is meant in old Hindu books by the expression, "a knowledge of the real meaning of sacred books." It ought to be cultivated because it is one of the first steps in knowing ourselves and understanding others.

In this civilization especially we are inclined to look outside instead of inside ourselves. Nearly all our progress is material and thus superficial. Spirit is neglected or forgotten, while that which is not spirit is enshrined as such. The intuitions of the little child are stifled until at last they are almost lost, leaving the many at the mercy of judgments based upon exterior reason. How, then, can one who has been near the Golden Gates—much more he who passed through them—be other than silent in surroundings where the golden refulgence is unknown or denied. Obliged to use the words of his fellow travellers, he gives them a meaning unknown to them, or detaches them from their accustomed relation. Hence he is sometimes vague, often misleading, seldom properly understood. But not lost are any of these words, for they sound through the ages, and in future eras they will turn themselves into sentences of gold in the hearts of disciples yet to come. MOULVIE.

Digitized by Google

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

DEAR ———— September 10th, 1914.

* * * * * * *

You must not permit yourself to be drawn into the current views of war; and to regard it as an unmitigated evil which the devil has thrust upon mankind in spite of the efforts of a not sufficiently omnipotent God. It is God who sends war as well as peace. It is God who sends hunger as well as plenty. It is God who sends work and poverty as well as leisure and wealth.

Nor must you allow yourself to become contaminated by the modern western horror of death, which is rapidly making wretched cowards of us all. These are the horrible, materialistic views of an unreligious and selfish, comfort-loving generation.

I do not mean that war is not dreadful, that the pain and suffering are not pitiable; but I do mean that they are necessary, salutary and remedial. War is a crude remedy. It is the calomel of nature, to purge us of our sins when they have accumulated to an undue degree.

In this particular case I believe that either a class war or an international war was necessary, and of the two the former is infinitely the more terrible both in action and results.

You are quite right in feeling it to be a frightful burden on the Master. You are also quite right in thinking that we can help him,—not figuratively, but actually—if we deliberately try to do so. One way is to consider our various faults as foes, and to fight them daily and hourly with the *intention* of offering him the results of our efforts for him to use as he pleases in the actual war. I know that he can and does use such efforts and that they are much more potent than we dream.

With kindest regards and best wishes to you all, I am

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ———— September 18th, 1914.

* * * * * * *

When a person is in pain, your desire is to comfort. The least idea of criticism or argument is abhorrent:—and yet, if I see you taking your experiences in a wrong way, I am tempted to point this out at the expense of my own reputation for sympathy and kind-heartedness.

If a woman has no beliefs at all, one can understand how her world would seem to be upset and life seem worthless and hollow if some loved one has to go off to danger and perhaps to death. But millions of women have the courage and moral stamina, even without any religious belief, to accept such a situation with calmness, poise, serenity and resignation. How much more then should you, who have an immense advantage over

Digitized by Google

most other women in your beliefs, show by your attitude and conduct an example to those less fortunately placed.

You, a firm believer in immortality, in reincarnation, knowing that suffering and death are not evils, but are sent by God for our regeneration and best interests,—you, especially, should not allow yourself to waver a single instant before such a common—almost universal—experience as that of having a loved one go forth to war. And yet you write about it as if your world had suddenly caved in and your life ended in chaos. Are we T. S. members to fall short of the common standard instead of being away above it?

It is our mission to set an example to others, not to follow some distance after;—an example of courage, of faith, of poise, of selflessness. We stand in the vanguard; we hew out the way for others to tread; we are the *point* of the wedge which the Master is driving into the weakness and materiality of the world: therefore our task, our duty, our ordinary conduct, must be in accordance with a much higher standard than yet exists in the world.

Suffer? Yes, of course, suffer, if need be as Mary suffered when she had the courage to stand at the foot of the Cross and watch her son die a disgraceful and agonizing death. *There* is an example for you. But no amount of suffering must be allowed to break our wills, to lower our colours, to lessen our faith that whatever happens is for the best.

Any giving way, any emotionalism, any excitement, any abandonment to grief,—self-centredness of any kind, is a lowering of standards, a failure and a disgrace.

Does this seem hard? Do I seem harsh and unsympathetic? I can assure you that my heart is wrung with the thought of the suffering you must have, and I would do my utmost to help you bear each single pang; but that does not blind me to the ideal towards which you should strive and it is my duty to remind you of that ideal at a time when circumstances seem to have obscured it.

It is false kindness to let your friends give way to selfish and unreasoning grief; it makes things worse, not better. Remember this in your efforts to help others. They may think you hard and unsympathetic, *for a time*. If so, offer that as a part of your sacrifice in trying to help.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

September 27th, 1914.

DEAR ———

I was, and am, exceedingly glad to see that you had of your own accord, braced to meet the emergencies which the war has called upon you to confront, and that in large measure you did not need my effort to help you.

These are terrible times, for all of us, not only for you who are so personally close to and connected with the war. I do not know anyone

Digitized by Google

trying to live a religious life at the present time who is not going through her or his particular private and personal hell. I suppose it is a part of the price we pay for our feeble yet willing desire to help the Master. He lets each give what he can to the common need; and we give struggle and pain.

It is horrible to sit by and see others suffer, but think of the countless years when that has been the unremitting and ungrateful task of the Master. Is he not doing it perpetually? And we know that this suffering which he sees we must have, none the less wrings his heart with anguish. It is his perpetual cross, his hourly crucifixion.

Do not let go your firm grip on your rule. We need this sort of mechanical aid especially in times of stress, when our minds are inclined to excuse relaxations.

With my best wishes for your welfare, I am,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

October 11, 1914.

DEAR ———

Your letter which I have just received, shows quite clearly the burden and suffering of the present time, and how the strain and trouble have affected you. I feel moved to the deepest sympathy, for I can assure you that my understanding of the war and of the conditions in ..... is much more complete than you realize.

I would wish, if able, to be of that real assistance which the positions we occupy should make imperative. Therefore it is of you as a would-be disciple that I must think, rather than of you as an individual and personal friend. In my previous letters, as in this, it is to the former that I address myself.

I cannot feel that it is anything but quite natural that you should be so disturbed, while at the same time I cannot help wishing that you could have maintained throughout the disciple's attitude. When outer affairs are more settled, you will be able to look back upon all these experiences, and understand the meaning and purpose of events and what I have written regarding them.

We who are striving for the life and attainment which Theosophy shows, must first of all realize that even the highest standard of those not so striving, because knowing so much less, is far below what we should expect of ourselves. The complete realization of this fact is a first step in comprehension.

I must ask you to believe that I do not intend any reproach by this, but were I not, at such a time, to state it, I should fail in a serious duty and what I know to be my heavy responsibility.

With my kindest regards and best wishes for you and yours, I am

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

April 1st, 1915.

DEAR ———

This is Holy Week, and a very special time for all of us who are interested in the Master's special work and special efforts. My mind is so full of these things that it is hard for me to twist it back to the war and to your comments and difficulties about the war, and yet there is one thing I want to say.

The reconciliation of the undoubted horror of this war—and all war—with the fact that it is a good thing and a part of the Master's plan, is, I think, along some such line as the following:

The battle between the forces of good and evil usually takes place on inner planes, either the mental, or the moral, or some psychic plane. You can see for yourself, no doubt, that in recent years this battle has been going against the Powers of Light. The world, as a whole, was becoming more and more irreligious, more and more material, more and more given to sensual indulgence of all kinds; luxury and the craving for physical comfort and well-being were rampant; socialism—a purely material conception of life—was growing and spreading. This was all obvious. Whole nations, like the French, were pushing religion out of their personal as well as out of their national lives. From the standpoint of the soul, from the point of view of the Master, humanity was in a desperate condition and perishing of sloth and rottenness. The souls of men were slowly strangling in spite of the efforts to give them some spiritual breath. I do not believe you realize how very bad things were. The unusual character of the Theosophical Movement and the efforts made through it, indicate the unusual character and desperate nature of the need.

So the war was allowed to come,—may even have been precipitated, and the great battle was dragged down to the material plane where it can be and is being fought out with a tithe of the actual suffering and risk which would have resulted if the struggle had been confined to the inner world. From the Master's standpoint, therefore, it all comes down to the question of a dead soul or a dead body, and naturally he prefers a dead body. It is the same if expressed in terms of suffering. A strangling, rotting soul is infinitely worse than a mangled body, yes, even than a defiled body such as of those poor Belgian women you write of. It is all horrible enough, God knows, but it is as it is, and is what the Master has to work with. I wonder he does not get discouraged. Think of his perpetual crucifixion! Yet he remains calm and serene and undismayed, nay—full of hope and joy because of what is being accomplished and what is going to be.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

May 24th, 1915.

DEAR ———

I have your letter. It shows a condition which is a very decided improvement over the previous attitude of resentment and rebellion, but it is still far from satisfactory. You are in a negative state, which is never comfortable or profitable. You need to take longer, larger, wider views of the war and of life, and not be swept off your feet by the emotional turmoil of your environment.

You began by hating the war and thinking it an unmitigated evil.

You still hate the war, but accept it with resignation because you have to.

If you had understood the condition of Europe, you would have longed eagerly for the war and would be enthusiastically in favour of it, as the easiest, simplest and best solution of infinitely worse things. That would be the positive attitude, which you would maintain, serene and undisturbed, even amidst the psychic whirlwind in which you live.

If, for instance, you were to read such a book as *France Herself Again,* by the Abbé Ernest Dimnet, you would see that the war is just what France needed for her salvation. England too was going down hill with frightful rapidity, with its growing socialism, drunkenness and materiality. It was a short, sharp pain, or generations of slow and growing torture, affecting every class and state, and carrying with it none of the inspiration and nobler feelings which a war generates. We should have had the whole world full of the horrid license and evils of war, permeating every walk of life, without anything to call out the better and higher instincts. What do a few years of war amount to in comparison?

All these men and women who have died, would have died anyhow, would have suffered somehow. The war gives them a chance to die nobly and usefully, to suffer thankfully and in a manner to inspire others. It is a privilege and an opportunity which the countries involved have earned by what remains of good in them. I am afraid that this country has *not* earned the privilege of participating, but I do not know. We may have to have our regeneration come through a social-civil war, which is infinitely worse than a war with the Germans.

You still have a lot of mental barriers, the result of your racial, national and family heredity; you still look upon death and suffering as evils. The Lodge does not. It looks upon death as a release, and upon suffering as a privilege. It is hard for us to get ourselves round to such a point of view, in spite of the teachings of Christ, of religion, and of the example of the saints, because it runs counter to the whole trend of modern thought which we inherit and which is saturated with materialism. But we must try to do this nevertheless, and especially in so vital a matter as the war.

While on the one hand, therefore, I sympathize keenly with your personal suffering, I can see quite clearly on the other hand, that for the

Digitized by Google

sake of those you love, as well as for your own sake, you need *to take a brace,* and with supreme effort of will to increase your faith and your hold on your mind. This, before long, would bring truer understanding, better poise, greater usefulness. . . .

Believe me

Very sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

July 12th, 1915.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

I do not wonder that you feel depression in England's atmosphere. She has not been an edifying spectacle during these recent weeks. I suppose that the governing class have been under such a continuous strain for so many months, that their nerves are on edge, but that in itself is a sign of weakness. The nerves must be impervious to strain and disaster. I suppose you realize that the ideal qualities for a disciple and a statesman are exactly the same. The Asquiths and Lloyd Georges and Bonar Laws of England are fit for their jobs in just so far as they have the qualities which would make them good disciples. It is merely a question of direction of energy, not of difference of quality or capacity. The faults and limitations which make them poor ministers, would make them poor saints, and vice versa.

France shows up much better, so far as one can judge. This country is so hopeless that it is not worth talking about.

There is nothing specific that I can suggest for you to do. This is a time of preparation for us and should be so regarded. Look upon life as a training you are receiving for the time of action to come. It is not far off, and you can realize from the state of the world what a tremendous need the Master has for competent assistants.

I am sorry to hear that you have been ill again. That is another handicap we must learn to overcome. It seems a hard and unsympathetic statement, but ill health is always our own fault and is a barrier which we must surmount. It can be overcome by the will. The physical body is more absolutely the servant of the will than we can realize. It can be completely dominated. Apart from specific causes, like overeating, etc., the chief source of trouble is negativeness. For instance no one who is positive ever "catches a cold." But we have such rotten habit-ridden bodies, that we must not go to extremes: we must accept necessary limitations, and use both common sense, and doctors, if necessary.

I am, with best wishes,

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

November 7th, 1915.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

I am not surprised that you are having a difficult and a painful time. We all are. A movement such as ours, so close to the real heart of things, cannot help at a time like this, but bring its members into the turmoil and maelstrom of the gigantic struggle between Good and Evil. We are shielded from the worst, for we could not stand under the real strain, but every ounce of pressure we can carry, every particle of effort we make, every self-conquest, our poise, our serenity, all tend to lessen the burdens carried perpetually by those who guard and cherish us.

We were warned from the first to take "long views" of the war. I do not believe that the first act is yet over, yet just what that means I do not know. It is bound in the nature of things to be a long war, but that does not mean necessarily that it won't seem to end and then break out again. The world is not bad enough to have Germany conquer, and it is not good enough to make possible an easy victory. The countries fighting on the side of right are themselves too wicked to be entitled to help unless it comes in a form that purges and cleanses them. So we must expect a long war, or series of wars, much suffering and pain, many deaths and disappointments; but we can be and should be sustained by the consciousness that it is all part of the Master's plan and that it all makes for the highest and best happiness of every one concerned. Remember that he wants us to be *happy,* and even when he chastises and corrects, even when he permits war and death and pain to run riot throughout the world, he is still doing it, individually and collectively, because it is the shortest and easiest road to happiness. Any other view is treason, treason to the Master himself, who is our great Captain, fighting campaigns too big for our understanding, but for our benefit and happiness. Nervous strain is also a sign of disloyalty. Look at the faces in the old Italian paintings. Those people lived in a time even more upset and tumultuous than this, but there isn't a sign of present worry or trouble in any of them. Their faces show what they went through to reach their place of peace, but they show peace.

So must we strive likewise: it is by living finely, serenely, calmly, in the midst of struggle and pain, that we too can reach peace, and can bear an ever increasing share of the Master's burden.

Make your meditations on these great themes and they will lift you out of the hurly-burly of everyday life, into the ever present world of the Eternal.

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

From Theosophy to Christian Faith, by E. R. McNeile, with a Preface by the late Bishop of Oxford; published by Longmans Green & Co. The authoress is to be congratulated on having escaped safely from the Society which goes by, and misuses, the name of Theosophy,—headed by Mrs. Annie Besant and Mr. (now "Bishop") Leadbeater, "the most authoritative living exponents of Theosophy" (p. 5). Her contact with this Society seems to have been prolonged and intimate, for speaking of its average member she says, "If he perseveres, he sooner or later places himself under a mental direction so exacting that what he shall think or what he shall believe, on almost every subject, is decided for him by others" (p. x) while she states (p. 5) "I have been admitted to the inner school by Mrs. Besant herself," and later, "There is a considerable body of beliefs which no genuine and convinced Theosophist would dream of disputing—which, indeed, it would be disloyalty to the Society and to the chosen mouthpiece of the Master to venture to call in question." Such expressions, if compared with the proclamation on the back cover of the QUARTERLY,—"The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose"—will be seen to carry on their very face the perversions of any genuine Theosophic principle,—let alone of common sense. The whole book breathes rebellion, and a very proper and righteous rebellion, at the assumed authority and dogmatism of the leaders at Adyar; as such phrases, "the large amount of dogmatic teaching on these subjects contained in its authoritative literature," (p. 33) or, "People in general are expected to accept the *ipse dixit* of two or three psychic observers: they are not expected to verify it," will show. Nor are such expressions an exaggeration of the facts of the case as existing in the Adyar Society to-day. It is indeed fortunate that the authoress has washed her hands of the whole thing, and has turned to Christianity. One thing we regret. Misled by the travesty, which is all she knows of Theosophy, the authoress has accepted without investigation the attacks of the Society for Psychical Research against Madame Blavatsky. Second hand criticism of others is always a dangerous and never a charitable undertaking; even though the writer cannot in this instance be blamed for associating Madame Blavatsky with the travesty of everything for which that splendidly upright and much martyred woman stood. It is the Adyar Society which is responsible, not only for their perversions of Madame Blavatsky's own personal contributions to our knowledge of Theosophy, but also for the errors made by those ignorant of Madame Blavatsky herself, who are misled by the distortions of her doctrine which they are taught.

MARION HALE.

Through an Anglican Sisterhood to Rome, by A. H. Bennett, published by Longmans Green and Co., 1914.

The Story of an English Sister, by Ethel Romanes, published by Longmans Green and Co., 1918.

Life of the Viscountess De Bonnault D'Houet, 1781-1858, Foundress of the Society of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, by the Rev. Father Stanislaus, F. M., Capuchin, published by Longmans Green and Co., 1913.

Digitized by Google

Many members of the Society are interested in books which reveal the inner experience of different types of Christians. Spiritual experience being one, though it has as many forms as there are individuals capable of expressing it, any genuine records of steps along the Path have value. As the tenth numbered Rule in the second section of *Light on the Path* says, "Learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men;" and further, "Study the hearts of men, that you may know what is that world in which you live and of which you will to be a part."

Members must understand something of the point of view of those to whom they would wish to carry the light Theosophy brings. Religious Orders are a mystery to the lay majority to-day; and yet in at least three branches of the Christian Church, many kinds of Religious Orders are supported by thousands of the best—the most practical, self-sacrificing, and zealous—Christians which the Churches possess. The three books whose titles are given above afford interesting material through which to reach the spirit and purposes of certain of those Orders. They also reveal, not only how it is that sincere seekers after the higher life think and feel, but also the limitations to which all who have not the genuine catholicity of Theosophy are condemned.

The first book, *Through an Anglican Sisterhood to Rome,* gives not only a simple and even entertaining account of life in one of the leading Communities for women in the Church of England, but also of the reasons which prompted the authoress, as also practically all the Benedictines, both monks and nuns, of the Anglican Communion, to transfer their allegiance to Rome in 1912. These reasons had not hitherto appeared in print.

Miss Bennett, and the Anglican Benedictines of Caldey, as well as the nuns of Malling and Kent, became totally unable to reconcile their own opinions of what was right, either in liturgical matters or in interpretations of creed and dogma, with the conflicting and mutually opposed decisions of several Bishops in the English Church. Their demand was for a definite "authority," which could maintain some uniformity, and which would put an end to the conflicts of opinion that perpetually agitated both individuals and communities. No final and definite "authority" appearing—and Miss Bennett evidently feeling that it was "dishonest" to appear "Roman," or to use liturgies not included in the Prayer Book—she, and her friends the Benedictines, solved their difficulties by "submission to the Roman Obedience."

If the Theosophic platform, and above all the Theosophic method of perfect tolerance and consideration were thoroughly understood, at least by the Bishops and responsible clergy in both the Anglican and the Roman Communions, such problems would simply never arise, and would never have arisen in the long history of the Church. More than this; in our opinion, if the Master Christ's own purposes were really understood in the several Churches, the energy of their members would be directed toward living a life of discipleship, rather than in seeking authority about spiritual matters outside the spiritual world, or in nearing personal shipwreck over the question as to which language or what prayers should be used in a form of religious worship.

The second book, *The Story of an English Sister,* is a simple account of a wholesome English girl, the daughter of cultured and literary parents, who, though endowed with great feminine attractiveness and with brilliant intellectual gifts, yet found her truest happiness in the religious life. Her character is revealed by copious extracts from her letters, which are so full of worldly interests and slang that only a persistent reading discloses the depth of religious conviction, and the high principle that underlay her thinking and feeling. The book is marred by too scant explanation of events which a reader unfamiliar with English life does not understand; and by the obvious desire on the part of a solicitous mother to defend the religious life at the expense of presenting her daughter's real struggles. Since the deflection of the Benedictines referred to above, Religious Communities have been subject to severe criticism throughout England. However, this account will

Digitized by Google

give many readers a new conception of the practical value, the happiness, and the human sanity of the religious life. Sister Etheldred had such a fine and rare nature, which is traced in every line of her singularly pure face, that one might wish that she had been able to receive more direct spiritual direction than that made possible by the Church of England as it is to-day.

In the third book, the *Life of the Viscountess De Bonnault D'Houet,* all the great advantages of the "Roman" heritage are set forth, together with its limitations. Madame D'Houet came of a titled French family, whose ancestors fought in the Crusades and stood beside St. Jeanne d'Arc at the Coronation in Rheims Cathedral. Wealthy, worldly in the good sense, and actually opposed to the religious life, the account of how the Master reached this good Catholic French woman, and turned her rebellion and disobedience into loyalty and self-sacrificing service, is of extraordinary interest. She had, what Miss Bennett and Miss Romanes (Sister Etheldred) lacked, a real spiritual director or guide, in the person of Father Varin, S. J., the famous director of Madame Barat, Foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Madame D'Houet herself founded the Society of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, and "she found in the constitutions of the Jesuits the main principles upon which the Institute should be governed." It has become one of the three great teaching orders for women of the Catholic Church.

The book is an excellent biography, Roman in tone, but catholic and therefore theosophic in its account of a spiritual life which was universal in its significance. It is tempting to dwell on the heroic measures used by Father Varin to test both Madame D'Houet's vocation and her spiritual strength. He crossed her will in every direction, gave her conflicting orders, and subjected her to a discipline which was calculated literally to "try the patience of a saint." Other confessors only added to her burdens. Madame D'Houet was able, however, to rise above any attacks against her lower nature, and "the snake of self" in her was not merely scotched, but killed. Perhaps the most refreshing characteristic, which breathes throughout the whole biography, is the simple and perfectly natural way that real spiritual experience is taken for granted. Madame D'Houet is constantly in communication with her Master, and holds conversations with him about the affairs of life, almost from day to day. It brings back vividly to mind the early traditions about Madame Blavatsky; and after all, in its very different way, carries something of the same message,—greatly diluted, and conveyed through a far narrower channel.

A. G.

Digitized by Google

QUESTION No. 245.—*How does a man overcome Karma; cease making Karma?*

ANSWER.—When his will is perfectly united to the Divine Will, when he acts no more from himself or his own will, when he can say with St. Paul, "I live, no not I, but Christ liveth in me." What Karma can he then create? Surely it is all part of the Master's Karma, as his Manas is part of the Master's Manas; and the Master, having renounced his own will, and living only as an expression of the Divine Will, his Karma is nothing more than the working of Divine Law itself. So that he is an administrator of Karma, "Lord of Karma," as the phrase is, and the disciple shares in this lordship. Karma belongs to the world of personality; detached from that world, willing only the Master's will, and at each point fulfilling that will, the disciple is no more under Karma, but is one with it. Thus as a thrall he has overcome it, and as an impediment he has ceased making it. That which held him back, he first made into a ladder by which to climb; and then, adding understanding to his obedience, into a solvent by which his nature is welded to the Master's nature in acceptance and in dominion. CAVÉ.

QUESTION No. 242 (Continued).—*Is there any possible point of reconciliation between the Theosophical idea of brotherhood and the best of the humanitarian ideas on the subject? Take, for instance, a person who is giving her whole life, and the very best of herself to social work, to righting other people's supposed wrongs and straightening out their affairs to the best of her ability. To her, abstention from this kind of work, and above all lack of interest in it or disapproval of it, is the height of unbrotherliness. In this case both the student of Theosophy and the Social Worker would have the desire to help; is there any reconciliation between their ideas as to the best means of doing so?*

ANSWER.—A similar question: "What is the attitude of Theosophy toward movements for social betterment of which we hear so much?" (No. 118), was answered by Mr. C. A. Griscom as follows:

"This question can be answered in many ways, and from several points of view.

"We may quote from the statement printed each month on the last page of this magazine, and say that The Theosophical Society (a very different thing from Theosophy, mind you), welcomes any work which has for its object the bettering of humanity. But that only shifts the question, which becomes a query as to whether any specific 'movement for social betterment' really benefits humanity.

"Or we may say that Theosophy has no attitude towards such movements. Theosophy, i. e. Wisdom-Religion, has no direct connection with any plan of social reform. One is a religion, all-inclusive, complete in itself; the others are man-made efforts to do specific things which are worthy and useful according to your point of view. One person may think giving soup to the hungry a fine work; another may be perfectly genuine in believing that it encourages pauperism. I know an enthusiast who spends her life showing little children how to grow lettuce, radishes, and what not, in the vacant plots of New York City. It is admirable work. Others devote themselves to cooking, sewing and housekeeping

Digitized by Google

schools; still others to teaching mothers how to care for their babies, and boys how to resole their own shoes: all admirable. Still others believe these to be palliatives only, and wish to cut the Gordian knot of poverty and ignorance by bringing about some general social reform, some socialistic program. One sees at once that the widest and most honest difference of opinion can exist as to the usefulness and value of these kinds of humanitarian work and the question arises, 'Does Theosophy throw any light on the whole subject?' Can we use it as a touchstone to determine whether or not these things are worth while, and, of several, which are the best? I think the answer would be something like this:

"Theosophy would not be what it purports to be, namely, the Wisdom-Religion, if it could not illumine all the problems of common life. In this particular case, if one might dare to speak in its name it would say:

"All human suffering, all misery, all the problems with which socialism and philanthropy and humanitarian work try to deal, all these are controlled by Karma, by the Law of Cause and Effect, which seeks always to force individuals to a greater and clearer and more perfect obedience to Divine Law. If we would do away with misery and unhappiness, we must do away with the ignorance of Divine Law, the infraction of which causes the misery and unhappiness. We may palliate the results of this disobedience, we may wipe away the tears caused by pain, we may spend our lives in a loving and self-sacrificing effort to undo the effects which individuals are suffering; and all this is fine and noble and commendatory. But the wise man would try to strike at the root of the whole trouble, ignorance of the laws of life; and he would spend his time and energies teaching people those laws so that new causes of misery would not be created. This seems more worth while than to try to alleviate those already in existence and which must work themselves out to the last iota of a perfect balance."

ANSWER.—Reconciliation, yes; but let us try to arrive at it by looking toward the centre, by looking at the facts, not at appearances. Suppose I feel that I have a call to help those around me to straighten out their tangles, after having done my utmost to get all my own lines running straight. In that case I should have to study their circumstances, first,—asking many questions like these: What lessons do they evidently need to learn? What means of learning is life giving them? Where are they missing their lessons? Can they be helped there? What is the most favourable result I could hope for if I tried to give them that help? Where might I do more harm than good? Parents know that when they are trying to teach their children some of the fundamental laws of life, there are situations in which they would not welcome the advent of Aunt Lucy, a maiden aunt with time and leisure to give the children a "good time," regardless of conditions. It is painfully well known to them, already, that Johnny sometimes goes hungry to bed because he refuses the glass of milk which the doctor says he must be taught to drink before his supper. They are conscious of the hot rebellion in Mary's heart over some necessary crossing of her stubborn little will; she will probably carry it so far that she will be ill; she will surely upset the rest of the nursery with her tantrums. The reinforcement of Aunty Lucy's sympathy for them in their troubles makes the struggle harder, for them and for their parents. That would be true even if Aunt Lucy gave up a motor trip which she had been planning the whole year, and, at much discomfort to herself, squeezed into cramped quarters in their home, so that she might be at hand to see that the parents were not too unkind.

We all admire self-sacrifice. That is one reason why it should not be devoted to a bad cause; the effect of such action is so confusing to others. In one sense, and in one only, the better the motive behind a wrong action, the more resulting harm. That being true, so far as the onlooker is concerned, how about the recipient? How is it with the recipient of mistaken charity, or of the "help" that would not

Digitized by Google

be called charity. If a church offers him assistance of a kind which would be pauperizing, and hence degrading to him, is it not misleading to him? Can he be expected to see that when such aid is offered, his manhood should inspire him to refuse it, and that it is something much more real that the church should give him instead? That were indeed to expect much insight from him. Does it become easier for him to realize himself as a child whom God is trying to reach and to teach, if some better educated person, whom he ought to be able to regard as understanding more about what is best and right than he does, accepts his standards, and makes every effort to get him merely what he wants? Surely he is then confirmed in his misunderstandings, not helped to see further. How is he to know that the benefactor whom he sees using her friends in a perfectly shameless way, in order, perhaps, to hold for him some position which his own carelessness or wrong-doing has caused him to forfeit, is only *acting down* to his level, for his supposed benefit? How can he know that she would scorn to take a similar position where she herself was concerned? How can he get any insight into what right standards, right impulses are? Whatever may be his view for himself, he wants to give his children the right sense of things and here too, he must be hopelessly confused by some of those who are mistakenly trying to shore-up the supposed lapses, oversights, and negligences of that Divinity that shapes our ends.

Are we not all, high and low, rich and poor, children of God? Must not the essence of our efforts to be brotherly consist in trying to find out what the Father wants of each—and then doing it? E.

QUESTION NO. 246.—*Will you kindly define the following terms: "Higher and lower psychism"; "Occultism and pseudo-occultism."*

ANSWER.—"Occultism" means the science of that which is hidden, the hidden laws of the soul. The life and teaching of Christ, of Buddha, of Krishna, of every Avatar is occultism, is the embodiment and revelation of the eternal laws of the soul, the laws which govern the evolution of that "to whose growth and splendour there is no limit." For there are such laws, fixed and immutable, and the price which the soul must pay for its growth is implicit obedience to them. "Pseudo-occultism" is that which pretends to be occultism and is not. For instance any dabbling with the hidden laws or forces of the psychic plane for any material end—including bodily health—or for the gratification of the desires or the unhealthy curiosity of the personality.

"Psychic" is sometimes used to include everything above the material plane and short of the Absolute. (Strictly speaking anything below the Absolute is a reflection.) "Higher psychic" usually means those higher worlds of form where order reigns. "Lower psychic" is applied to the realm of chaos between the material and the spiritual worlds, the world of passions, of emotion, of unregulated and evil desires, of kama-lokic spooks. It is of this region that it is said that beneath every flower a serpent lies coiled. Those who dabble with spiritualistic seances, ouija boards, and similar activities, are opening themselves to the evil and degrading influences of this "lower psychism." J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—I would define psychism, briefly and comprehensively, as all forms of lower mental activity, reasonings, imagination, emotions, etc. "Higher" or "lower" would depend upon what was in control of these activities, and the goal to which they were directed. If the activity is controlled by the spiritual forces of the higher self, to further the purpose of the higher self, it would seem higher psychism. If the activity is uncontrolled, or dominated by the lower nature, or, as in the case of the Black Lodge, controlled by higher forces, but directed to an evil end,—in all these cases it would seem lower psychism. Occultism seems to me the science of transforming the baseness of the lower nature into the purity of the higher nature. Pseudo-occultism is anything that stops short of that end, and aims at a smaller goal, as the health, wealth, etc., of the mental scientists and others. C.

Digitized by Google

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

On Saturday, April the 24th, 1920, the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 10.30 a. m. at 21 Macdougal Alley, New York, by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston. The capacity of the room was taxed by the number of delegates, members-at-large, and members of the New York Branch and other Branches, who had gathered before the hour set for the opening session. On motion made by Mr. E. T. Hargrove and duly seconded, Mr. Johnston was elected Temporary Chairman of the Convention, and Miss Julia Chickering was duly elected Temporary Secretary. Mr. Johnston took the Chair, and it was moved and seconded that the Temporary Chairman appoint a Committee on Credentials. The Chair stated that since the standing of Branches and delegates was involved in the work of this committee, he would appoint to it Professor H. B. Mitchell, Treasurer T. S.; Miss I. E. Perkins, Assistant Secretary T. S.; and Miss M. E. Youngs, Assistant Treasurer,—requesting the committee to go into session immediately, and to report as soon as possible.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

Mr. Johnston: While the Committee on Credentials is at its work, it is the custom for the Temporary Chairman to extend a very cordial and very sincere welcome to the members of the Convention. I have, amongst other duties, to count up the years of life of The Theosophical Society whenever a diploma is sent, and I see with some wonder and deep gratitude that in November next we shall enter our forty-sixth year; so we are close to the half century. In the earlier days, the Society grew by the methods of expansion, propaganda, and so forth, and growth was marked by the number of our members. In the more recent years, growth is marked by growth of character in our members. That is a moral and spiritual growth which immediately meets with formidable obstacles; therefore, as it continues in the face of these obstacles, it becomes a very firm and well-founded spiritual life. If growth be marked in spiritual life, it should, each year, be in advance of the year before; therefore each Convention should be better and stronger and more full of spiritual understanding. The Convention marks in a way the keynote of the coming year; therefore let us determine that during this Convention we shall prove that we have grown, and that we possess that high aspiration and faith and that devotion which are both the cause and the fruit of growth. I am confident that this will be done and that this Convention will be the greatest and the best, because the most closely founded on spiritual law, that the Society has ever held. In this confident hope I again bid the delegates very cordially welcome.

Digitized by Google

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Chairman of the Committee, Professor Mitchell, reported that the credentials presented had been duly examined, and that the committee found twenty Branches, represented either by personal delegates or by proxies, and entitled to cast one hundred and twenty votes. [The asterisk marks credentials received later.]

Altagracia, Altagracia de Orituco, Venezuela*
Arvika, Sweden
Aurvanga, Kristiania, Norway
Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia
Blavatsky, Washington, D. C.
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
Hope, Providence, Rhode Island
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana
Jehoshua, Sanfernando, Venezuela
Karma, Kristiania, Norway
Krishna, South Shields, England
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio
Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
New York, New York
Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Providence, Providence, Rhode Island
Sravakas, Salamanca, New York
Stockton, Stockton, California
Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Virya, Denver, Colorado

On motion duly made and seconded, the report of the Committee on Credentials was accepted, and the Convention proceeded to its permanent organization.

The nomination of Professor Mitchell as Permanent Chairman was moved by Mr. Hargrove, seconded by Mr. C. Russell Auchincloss, and carried. The election of Miss Perkins as Secretary and Miss Chickering as Assistant Secretary was then made, and the permanent officers were duly installed.

ADDRESS OF THE PERMANENT CHAIRMAN

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: (Taking the Chair) I have before me two telegrams which I shall read at once: one from England, signed Bagnell, Graves, Keightley, reading, "Best wishes to the Convention."

The other from Indiana, from Judge McBride: "Unable to attend Convention. Returning from Florida, I find so much to do that duty holds me here. Mentally and spiritually upstanding, and physically feeling my seventy-eight years, I treasure memories of Blavatsky, Judge and that devoted band that survived the Chicago cataclysm. Keep to the Path. Love and greetings."

I assume that all those here present are members of The Theosophical Society. In our ordinary Branch meetings we welcome the public, but in the annual Convention of the Society, where we come together to consider its affairs and its policies, we must be able to talk with freedom, and a depth of feeling which we sometimes have to conceal when we speak to the public. It is with very deep feeling that I respond to your invitation to preside over the Convention. It is a privilege which you have extended to me for some years; and each year I realize more profoundly its responsibility. We seem but a small gathering. Nevertheless, it is a gathering of those who are the heirs, the inheritors, the custodians of a tradition which it is impossible to value rightly; it is more ancient than anything in our civilization, because more ancient than our civilization itself. It is the tradition of that divine power in the world which has built civilization after civilization, which has acted first as builder, and then as destroyer; destroying for the purposes of spirit, ultimately to rebuild. We are not only the inheritors of one form of religion, or of one form of manifestation of the divine power. We are the inheritors of religion itself and of all forms of the manifestation of divine power. It is as trustees of that ancient tradition—theosophia, the power and wisdom of God—that we come here to-day, in the exercise of our trusteeship. We have only to reflect upon it to realize the greatness of our privilege. We of all men should be most keenly conscious of our responsibility, for we, of all men,

Digitized by Google

should see most deeply into the spiritual significance of the life that is ours and that is lived about us. And it is for us, entrusted with an understanding of its meaning, to keep clear in our own minds and hearts the consciousness of the divine purpose to which our love and aspiration turn—because from such consciousness there comes a mould, which makes it easier for the divine forces to shape the evolution of the world.

It is our custom to hold our annual Convention in the spring of the year, when nature is manifesting the re-creative forces which have lain dormant through the winter, showing forth a power of life which was not dead but hidden; transforming dead leaves and rotting wood and refuse into growing plants; in that divine alchemy, taking all its dead elements up and re-forming them, revivifying them, and quickening them into beauty. It is a process of life, the knowledge of which is entrusted to us, that we may aid it to act for the regeneration of mankind as it acts for the regeneration of nature. It is as the representatives, however unworthy, of that great, age-old, infinitely potent tradition and power that we meet together to consider the interests of The Theosophical Society.

Our first business consists in the appointment of three regular Convention committees, to consider and plan for the business of the Convention—the Committee on Nominations, the Committee on Resolutions, and the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

On motion made by Mr. Hargrove, seconded by Mr. Woodbridge, these three Committees were appointed by the Chair, as follows; after which the reports of the officers of the Society were called for:

Committee on Nominations
Mr. K. D. Perkins, *Chairman*
Mr. A. L. Grant
Mrs. M. F. Gitt

Committee on Resolutions
Mr. E. T. Hargrove, *Chairman*
Mr. C. Russell Auchincloss
Mrs. Emma S. Thompson

Committee on Letters of Greeting
Dr. C. C. Clark, *Chairman*
Mr. Homer T. Baker
Miss M. D. Hohnstedt

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MR. JOHNSTON: It has been said at previous Conventions that the Executive Committee has the duty, between Conventions, of safe-guarding the welfare of the Society, and for that reason there has been often little to report, because no critical situation has arisen. There has been a record of new Branches, and new members, which is reported more properly by the Secretary. That has, for the most part, been about all we have had to report,—additions in Branches and membership. And this may be a suitable point to make clear the principle that The Theosophical Society is an open door. We have the duty, the obligation, to admit all applicants for membership who desire to work for our objects; and where there is a proper application for a Branch charter, we have the obligation to issue that charter, except in cases of criminality or moral turpitude. But so far as opinions, beliefs, and so on, are concerned, we have no right to refuse any diploma or any charter, because every individual and group of individuals has the right to come within the influence of the nucleus of universal brotherhood. As Professor Mitchell pointed out, the T. S. is a spiritual life which goes back many ages; it also goes forward many ages. Therefore, the nucleus of universal brotherhood, which we are striving to form, looks not so much to the humanity of to-day as to the spiritual life of future ages and future races. Therefore it becomes the duty of the Executive Committee to admit all properly accredited applicants. It is its further duty to do all in its power, thereafter, to safeguard that nucleus of universal brotherhood which has its splendid destiny in the future.

Digitized by Google

Therefore while every individual has the right to be brought into relation to that nucleus, if he fail to assimilate the principles of universal brotherhood, and that failure be shown by flagrant acts, then it is the duty of the Executive Committee to take what action may be possible and desirable to safeguard the nucleus of universal brotherhood against danger and against attack.

This brings me to the consideration of the situation as regards the German Branches. I think that it is not necessary more than to allude to the history of Germany since August 4th, 1914. The moral infamy of the German people is so clearly written on the memories of mankind—at least on our memories—that it is really needless to evoke once more the memory of those unspeakable abominations. The question is, what of the members of the Society who were in Germany during that time. We know that the whole German nation was very ingeniously lied to by its government,—also that it was very avid in the swallowing of those lies. But there is a presumption that members of the T. S. in Germany were so completely misled, that in spite of all their spiritual training, in spite of the fact that they should have stood for the foremost spiritual enlightenment and consciousness in their nation, there is a theoretical possibility that they were too completely deceived to see the facts. Therefore no action was taken during the war by the Executive Committee. In dealing with those German members, we waited for the event.

In criminal law, he who aids and abets the crime is equally guilty with the principal, both as regards culpability and penalty. The question then is, how far did those German members aid and abet the infamies of the German people. Only they themselves can furnish the evidence, and we have waited for the evidence. The armistice was signed November 11th, 1918, and a year and a half has elapsed since that time. During that year and a half the German members have had ample opportunity, both through the public press and through the confessions of men like Lichnowsky and the author of *J'Accuse;* men like Maximilian Harden and ever so many others, to learn the truth; they have had excellent opportunity also through the study of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, and we know they have received those QUARTERLIES. Therefore we are entitled to assume that they are now fully in possession of the facts. What then is their action? How are they going to register themselves—not what are *we* going to do, but what are *they* going to do, or what have they done? We will record that which they write down; no more than that.

You saw in the January number of the QUARTERLY a considerable correspondence, and a certain number of letters showing that some, at least, of the members in Berlin and elsewhere have made confessions of repentance, shame, humiliation, over the despicable and infamous actions of the nation. It remains for them to bring forth fruits of repentance, if they are really—not nominally—to form part of the nucleus of universal brotherhood of races and ages yet unborn. It is a question of fact, not of words, to form a part of that nucleus.

There are those who have not made confession of repentance or contrition; who, on the contrary, are flagrantly unrepentant. They do not deplore the violation of Belgium; they do not deplore the infamies recorded in the Bryce Report; they do not deplore the sinking of the Lusitania or the abominable policy of the German submarine warfare. What they do deplore is the action of the Theosophical Convention.

Those of us who were present at the Convention of 1915 will remember that this country was then beset by a deplorable miasma of moral neutrality, a balancing between good and evil; the attitude of arbitration between God and the devil. The Theosophical Society, believing that the emergency called for a statement of fundamental principles, took a definite stand as regards neutrality, and said it was a disgrace and a shame, where a principle of righteousness was involved. The Convention therefore took the stand that war is not necessarily

Digitized by Google

a breach of universal brotherhood, that waging a righteous war may be a most splendid privilege,—Theosophy brings not peace but a sword. This offended the unrepentant German members of the T. S. Therefore, instead of attacking the sinking of the Lusitania or the policy of the atrocities, it was our action in Convention that they attacked. And that is how they wrote themselves down,—as obdurate and unrepentant. I shall read documents to make that clear.

As to the question of repentance and forgiveness, there is an oft misquoted text in the New Testament, which rightly reads: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and *if he repent,* forgive him." (Luke 17, 3.) And so clear is the moral law there, that, I believe, the Council of Trent, which marks a critical formulation of Church teaching, has gone so far as to say that God himself cannot forgive unrepented sin. Here then, these members write themselves down as obdurate and unrepentant, and instead of clothing themselves in sackcloth and ashes, and confessing their great, shameful, and disgraceful sins, they turn around and attack the action of The Theosophical Society. The first of these letters was dated December 31st, taking the form of a motion intended for this present Convention.

THEOSOPHISCHE GESELLSCHAFT ZWEIG BERLIN

Berlin SW. 48, 31 December, 1919.

To The Theosophical Society, New York
Motion for the Convention in April, 1920.

The undersigned members of The Theosopical Society, Berlin Branch, hereby put the motion to revoke the resolution adopted by the Convention in 1915:

(a) That war is not of necessity a violation of Brotherhood, but may on the contrary become obligatory in obedience to the ideal of Brotherhood; and

(b) That individual neutrality is wrong if it be believed that a principle of righteousness is at stake;—

as involving a dogma and therewith being contradictory to the principles of The Theosophical Society.

The mover of the resolution, it is true, did not suggest, according to his words, that it is the duty of any member of the Society not to be neutral; though, speaking for himself, he could not conceive of anybody as being neutral. There is not so much stress to be laid upon the words as on the practical effect of this resolution. That this resolution has operated as a dogma of The Theosophical Society and has borne dogmatic fruit is proven by the fact that a number of members of the Berlin Branch of The Theosophical Society openly declared in a pamphlet that whosoever does not adopt the said resolution can no longer be a member of The Theosophical Society, as all resolutions adopted by a Convention are binding for all members.

The undersigned are moreover convinced that the Spiritual Forces can impossibly be acting in a Theosophical Society that erred so far as to adopt a resolution of the kind. It is the conviction of the undersigned members that the Master Forces will turn again to the Society if the Convention of 1920 revokes the resolution of 1915 and therewith the dogma. It is for that reason, for the Cause of the Masters, that the undersigned beg the Convention to adopt their motion.

Fraternally,

Paul Raatz	Margarete Wollenberg	Robert Dubois
Ernst John	Woldemar Dietz	Elise Schneewolf
Martha Schmidt	Franz Busch	Gottlieb Schneewolf
Otto Vollberg	Karl Walzer	Clara Ribbeck
Willi Boldt	Gertrud Baader	Bertha Röhn
Anna John	Richard Baader	Ernst Conrad
	Max de Nève	

Digitized by Google

They moved to revoke the resolution of 1915 on the ground that this resolution involves a dogma and therefore contradicts a principle of the Society.

Now there is just one point of form which is worth going into at this juncture. The Convention adopted these resolutions in 1915. The Berlin Branch received a report in due time. (I confess with shame that at that time this country was not at war with Germany; mails were going through, and they received the report.) At the following Convention (1916), they presented a resolution providing that matters of this sort should be brought up some time beforehand. We accepted their proposal and embodied it in an amendment to the Constitution which reads as follows: "A copy of all resolutions affecting the policy, principles, or platform of The Theosophical Society, which are to be voted upon at the Annual Convention, shall be sent to the Executive Committee three months before said Convention, whereupon due notification of the proposed resolutions shall be given to all Branches by the Executive Committee."

This amendment originated in the Berlin Branch, which therefore accepted the entire propriety of resolutions affecting the policy, principles and platform of the Society being passed by Conventions. That was, in their view, an entirely right and proper proceeding.

You have heard what the Berlin Branch has had to say. The Dresden Branch, writing February 15th, 1920, says practically the same thing.

Dresden Branch T. S. February 15, 1920.

To THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, T. S.

We request you to lay the accompanying resolution of the Dresden Branch before this year's Convention, to be voted on, and to inform us of the result: *Resolution:* The Convention is requested to revoke (cancel) the resolutions passed by the T. S. Convention of 1915: (1) That war is not necessarily a breach of universal brotherhood; (2) That individual neutrality is unrighteous; and so on. Reasons: According to the *unanimous* view of the members of the Dresden Branch, these resolutions represent dogmas, and therefore, as such, contravene the Convention (? Constitution) and By-Law 38.

Further, at no time were the German Branches asked their opinion on these two points; but these resolutions were passed over the heads of the German Branches. A proceeding which cannot exist in any Society whatever, much less in a T. S. Convention.

Therefore we not only protest energetically against such an over-riding of the German Branches, but we further expect that this injustice toward the German Branches and this violation of the Constitution of the T. S. and By-Law 38 will be made good by the repeal of these resolutions unjustly passed by the 1915 Convention.

With Theosophical fraternal greetings,

(Signed) Emmy Hoffmann, *Secretary*,
K. T. Toepelmann, *President*.

By-Law 38 reads: "No member of The Theosophical Society shall promulgate or maintain any doctrine as being that advanced or advocated by the Society."

"Further, at no time were the German Branches asked or informed on these two points"—they were, of course, represented at the Convention that passed them. Through their own limitations they were not present in person to express their opinion, but their representatives heard the whole matter discussed. Yet "these resolutions were passed over the heads of the German Branches."

There is just one document more which I think, while it is later in date (March 17th, 1920), should be put in evidence at this point, because it reveals a great deal of the mental and moral conditions from which these rescinding resolutions arise. This is in the form of a letter of greeting. I am taking it now because it bears so directly on this subject.

Digitized by Google

Dresden, March 17, 1920.

To the Convention of The Theosophical Society, New York,

Greeting:

For the first time in a long period it is possible for the Dresden Branch of The Theosophical Society to greet the Members of the other Branches of the Society, in the person of their delegates to the Convention, and to have a share in their work.

The Dresden Branch does this the more willingly, because great doubts have arisen within its ranks as to whether The Theosophical Society is still the same as the Society within which the Dresden Branch worked before the outbreak of the great war.

So far as the Dresden Branch has been able to judge the situation, the Society, which has hitherto been free from dogmas, has been led to abandon its former standpoint, as set forth by its Leader in *The Key to Theosophy*, under the heading, "The Future of The Theosophical Society," abandoning the qualities there declared essential; freedom from prejudice, clear judgment, and perhaps even selflessness; or the effort to bring forth these qualities from the Society has not been able to withstand the self-seeking and evil passions and the discord and strife which spring from these, which, dwelling in the psychic forces, endanger and render well-nigh impossible the true work of the Society, in the view of its Founder, according to the chapter of *The Key to Theosophy*.

This at least is what our members have felt, in their ardent efforts to learn to understand the new direction of the Society, as they encounter it in the last and preceding Quarterlies; and others, so far as impartiality still remains within The Theosophical Society, must admit that we ourselves have preserved this impartiality, since we take as our guide only such directions as the Foundress of the T. S. has left us, for our guidance.

In conformity with the ardent effort of the Dresden Branch to fulfil the mission of the T. S., according to the view of its Foundress, as set forth in this chapter, the Dresden Branch proffers its good offices to the Society, and expresses the hope that the devotion of the members present will make it possible for the power and light of the Master to influence the acts of the Convention, in order that, in the future, "the fetters of creeds and dogmas, social and caste prejudices," antipathies toward peoples and races, may be kept far from the T. S., in order that our Society, according to the view of the "last Messenger of the Great Souls," may once again become "a living and healthy body," bringing a blessing to mankind, and constituting an active basis for the expected next Messenger.

For those, however, who need a further indication, we would close our greeting with the concluding words of the *Notes on the Bhagavad Gita*, by W. Q. Judge (William Brehon), who at the end of the fifth chapter, "The Book of Religion by Renouncing Fruit of Works," quotes and comments:

"'Effacement in the Supreme Spirit is gained by the right-seeing sage whose sins are exhausted, who hath cut asunder all doubts, whose senses and organs are under control, and *who is devoted to the well-being of all creatures.*'

"If the last qualification is absent, then he is not a 'right-seeing sage' and cannot reach union with the Supreme. It must follow that the humblest imitator, every one who desires to come to that condition, must try to the best of his ability to imitate the sage who has succeeded. And such is the word of the Master; for He says in many places that, if we expect to have His help, we must apply ourselves to the work of helping humanity—to the extent of our ability. No more than this is demanded."

With helpful fraternal greetings,

Dresden Branch, T. S.
(Signed) K. T. Toepelmann, *President*,
P. Bruege, *Secretary*.

Digitized by Google

It is hardly necessary to comment on that, hardly necessary to point out some slight inconsistency or irrelevancy in members of the German nation who are still unrepentant, preaching about the annihilation of their sins and the welfare of mankind. There are certain things which we hate,—murder, filthy uncleanness, and lying hypocrisy. Therefore it is difficult to comment with the cogency that is called for, on this extraordinary document; difficult to comment on this tender by the German members of their good offices to us, so that once more the Masters may co-operate with the Society and once more it may, in their estimation, become a healthy spiritual body. I do not feel equal to it. But the point is that he who aids and abets a crime is equally guilty in law, both as to culpability and punishment. We left it to the German members to put themselves on record as either protesting or concurring in the action of Germany. They have now put themselves on record in these two groups; they have registered their own situation. It merely remains for us to record the position they have taken up. The Executive Committee took that view and expressed it in a series of resolutions voted upon by all the members of the Committee and unanimously carried.

Whereas, The principal aim and object of The Theosophical Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour; and

Whereas, The German nation violated every known principle of brotherhood throughout the recent war, beginning with the violation of Belgian neutrality and continuing with demoniacal barbarities practised against innocent people; and

Whereas, The German members of The Theosophical Society, who may at one time have been ignorant of the facts, have now had every opportunity, from the pages of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY and from other sources, to learn the truth about their country's misconduct; and

Whereas, Some German members of The Theosophical Society have expressed the utmost sorrow for Germany's wrongdoing, and have written that they sincerely repent of their own share of the responsibility; and

Whereas, Certain other German members, instead of expressing repentance, have not only sought to justify themselves and their country, but also, in a communication dated December 31st, 1919, addressed to the Convention of The Theosophical Society, have attacked the Society on the pretext that the Society's declaration regarding neutrality, adopted by the Convention of April, 1915, was in itself a contradiction of the principles of the Society; and

Whereas, The attitude and action of these other German members is a repudiation of the principal aim and object of The Theosophical Society; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Executive Committee of The Theosophical Society, acting under By-Law 1 of its Constitution and By-Laws, hereby suspends the Charter of the Berlin Branch and the Diplomas of the following members thereof, namely, Paul Raatz, Ernst John, Martha Schmidt, Otto Vollberg, Willi Boldt, Anna John, Margarete Wollenberg, Woldemar Dietz, Franz Busch, Karl Walzer, Gertrud Baader, Richard Baader, Max de Nève, Robert Dubois, Elise Schneewolf, Gottlieb Schneewolf, Clara Ribbeck, Bertha Röhn, Ernst Conrad; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Committee recommends that at the Convention of The Theosophical Society to be held in New York in April, 1920, the said German members, and all others who adopt or approve a similar attitude, be expelled from the ranks of the Society.

The Constitution and By-Laws, as amended in 1917, gave the Executive Committee the power to expel, on good reason and after proper hearing; but the

Digitized by Google

members of the Committee were convinced that this matter is so vital, because so deeply related to the heart of our Movement, that while they themselves had not a shadow of a doubt as to what should be done, they have not taken the action of expelling these members, but have preferred to suspend their membership and their charter, and to bring the matter up before the Convention now for decision. The Executive Committee wishes therefore to turn the matter over to the Committee on Resolutions, which will consider it and present, I suppose, resolutions which will be brought up this afternoon, and which will be pretty thoroughly discussed before they are adopted—for the reason that this is a matter of such vital importance, one which goes so deeply into questions of spiritual principle, that every member of the Convention should come to a decision in the matter. Therefore the Committee will hand this material to the Committee on Resolutions for such action as that Committee shall deem fitting.

THE CHAIRMAN: The primary question before the Convention is the acceptance of the report of the Executive Committee. No matter how clear it may be to us what course we should pursue, in connection with the question laid before us by the Executive Committee, for the reason stated by the Chairman himself, that this matter goes deep into the fundamental principles which the Society must embody, I should be highly unwilling to have this Convention pass upon the question finally at this time. The Executive Committee proposes that it should be referred to the Committee on Resolutions and that upon the rendering of their report, the afternoon session should be devoted to a full, frank and complete discussion of the matter, that there may be no appearance of passing on it hurriedly.

MR. HARGROVE: I merely wish to second Mr. Johnston's motion, as a member of the Executive Committee. Of course, there is a great deal to be said which will be said this afternoon.

Motion carried unanimously.

THE CHAIRMAN: The next business is the report of the Secretary of the Society. It is a matter of profound regret to us that the state of Mrs. Gregg's health is not such as to permit her to be here to-day to present that report in person; but we are fortunate in having the Assistant Secretary to read it to us for her.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY T. S. FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 24TH, 1920

New Members

Our gain in membership this year has been in certain limited areas. In each Branch where there has been marked increase in numbers, two conditions have existed. First, a leader or leaders, enthusiastic and persistent in endeavoring to extend the activities of the Branch; second, members who gave themselves heartily to following up the leader's efforts. Both factors are evidently essential. At the same time we should not infer that every Branch would have made large gains in membership had both these conditions been present. There are times in the life of each Branch, as all the older members of the T. S. recognize, when its growth and its usefulness are to be measured by other standards than the number of accessions. Progress in understanding of the Theosophical Movement, greater devotion of heart and life to it, represent, in the membership of a Branch, increase in effective strength that would often count largely if it could be expressed in figures. In the earliest days of its history the Society had three classes of members; to-day we count only one class. Yet when it is my duty to record here the new members added to our rolls, I find myself making distinctions that are not called for in our By-Laws. Going over the lists, there comes up the name of one and another member whose record shows a new devotion to the cause of

Digitized by Google

Masters, during the past year—and I say to myself: Another added to the "Regulars"; another who regards this incarnation as the opportunity to try to live Theosophy. Only the Masters, however, could really know how many of our membership have this year been added to that number. So I must, after all, content myself with the usual form of recording Branches and members newly enrolled during the year. Charters have been issued to three new Branches: The Upanishad Branch in Ciudad Bolivar; the Sravakas Branch of Salamanca, New York; the Curaçao Branch in Curaçao, Dutch West Indies. During the year we have gained 70 new members, and lost 10. The additions are: In South America, 24. (This includes the members of the new Branch in Dutch West Indies which was formed through the activities of one of the members of the Jehoshua Branch of Venezuela); Norway, 8; England, 3; United States, 33; scattering, 2.

Among those members who have been lost by death or by resignation, was one whose connection with the Society had extended over many years and who had been given the great privilege of doing pioneer work for the Movement—Sr. F. Dominguez Acosta of Caracas, Venezuela. I should like to share with you the brief and touching announcement of his death, received a few days ago, from one of his long-time comrades:

"I beg to inform you, in order that you may do me the favor to impart the information to the other comrades, that on the evening of the 27th of this month we carried to the cemetery of this city the mortal remains of our beloved and ever to be remembered comrade, Señor Francisco Dominguez Acosta. We can but say: The Lord's will be done.

As he had no relatives in this city, the interment was made by us, his friends, with the propriety and solemnity which the merits of the deceased demanded."

In another letter from one of his fellow members in Venezuela it is said: "Both for his country and for literature in general, his loss is great and far reaching. He was the most impressive writer and the most brilliant orator I have ever known,—really a Chrysostom. That is the opinion of all who knew him."

Correspondence

This year necessity has been one of the stern teachers under whom your Secretary has been working. There have been many times when it was not possible to give prompt and complete attention to all the correspondence of the Office. Each inquiry from strangers, each letter from old friends in the work was welcomed, and was responded to in heart and desire; but physical limitations have sometimes made it quite impossible for me to write letters, or else have reduced them to abbreviated messages. As they went out they were short in form, but not shortened as to interest, and a glad entering into the needs and problems of the correspondent. It has been most gratifying to receive so many letters from members, saying that they felt they were closely in touch with the Office although they had had no recent letters. What pains most is to receive letters saying that the writer needed help, but did not ask for it, fearing that the Secretary might be too much occupied in other ways. Can we not be more simple about the matter this coming year? The Secretary's Office is entrusted with certain ranges of correspondence—Branches, members, inquirers, are freely invited to bring their wants and needs here. The Office is never short of helpers. It is my intention to use them more freely in your service. So there will always be someone free to give the information desired. Please do not undertake to show consideration by holding back inquiries; but show it, instead, by anticipating needs, so that

Digitized by Google

replies may not so often be desired "by return mail"! And please, hereafter, instead of addressing correspondence to the Secretary at 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, address the Secretary at P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York—this applies to all letters about the T. S., about Branch work, about the QUARTERLY.

Branch Activities

The most striking feature of the reports from Branches this year is the sense of responsibility, the note of consecration to the Movement, that runs through them all. There are, of course, accounts of the outer activities of the Branch. It is clear, however, that, in most Branches, those are regarded as a means of registering, for outsiders, something of what has come to Branch members in their individual efforts to understand and to follow the will of Masters, or of whatever guiding principle they acknowledge and serve. There is also an interesting coincidence in the number of Branches which, entirely without suggestion from Headquarters, have been basing either public meetings or study classes, upon Mr. Griscom's contributions to the QUARTERLY—some having selected the "Elementary Articles"; others his "Letters to Students." In this way his so distinctive note has evidently been kept sounding through the Branch work.

The Theosophical Quarterly

Some one has called the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY—the new Lodge Messenger. Certainly it is received as such in many hearts. This is true not only of our members, but among an increasing circle of readers who have no active share in the work of the Society. There are many letters of appreciation from non-members. It is all to their credit that they should adventure on the constant reading of a magazine with such a title,—one that makes no appeal to popular taste. But, once having learned to trust and admire it, what a sorry adventure it is to stop just short of the goal! Why does not some echo from the past, some hope for the future, lead them to take the next step? Why does not the quality of the QUARTERLY articles challenge them to get into touch with the Society? Taking the magazine as the fruit of Theosophy's tree, is it not natural that those who enjoy the fruit should want to know, for themselves, what the plans are for making grafts onto that tree?

Last year there were many members who feared that it might be impossible to continue the magazine, without Mr. Griscom. Looking back on the comments that have come to this Office, it is safe to say that no volume of the QUARTERLY has ever been found more inspiring and helpful than Volume XVII, which has been, from cover to cover, a testimonial of love and gratitude to the magazine's first and only Editor-in-chief.

The Quarterly Book Department

This publishing house, an important part of our work yet financially independent of it, has the rare distinction of being the only publisher who has not been raising prices. Several new editions of our standard books have been brought out during the year, but so far it has been possible to offer them at the old prices. Among the reprints, the most eagerly desired is *Fragments,* Volume One, which comes from the binder as these words are being written. The promise of last year still holds good. The Book Department *is* to give us books containing Mr. Griscom's contributions to the literature of the Movement, but no date for these publications can yet be fixed.

A Personal Acknowledgment

Thanks, profound thanks, for the opportunity given me to serve in this great cause is constantly welling up in my heart. First, to the Masters whose generosity

Digitized by Google

has used my small service in their great work; then to my fellow officers, whose unfailing support and guidance have made possible the conduct of this Office. I have been the recipient of much recognition, of many words of praise, that were, instead, their due. The Assistant Secretary has this year taken an increased share in the work of the office, but prefers that mention should be made here of those whose assistance has made that possible to her. All the residents at the Community House are, in one way or another, constantly contributing to the carrying on of this work, while definite branches of it are carried by certain of their number (Miss Chickering, Miss Hascall, Mrs. Vaile, Miss Graves, Miss Youngs, Miss Bell, Miss Lewis, and Miss Wood), with Mrs. Helle's help, as always, in addressing the foreign list of the Quarterly.

Assuring you that it is a joy to be entrusted with a form of service that neither sickness nor infirmities can wholly bar, this report is respectfully submitted.

ADA GREGG,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.

MR. WOODBRIDGE: I should like to make it a formal motion that the Convention accept Mrs. Gregg's report with *love* and thanks.

DR. CLARK: I do not find any words to say after that report. Could we not find some kind of flowers that would be better than words to send to Mrs. Gregg?

MR. HARGROVE: We did that last year and sent a kind of round-robin letter of greeting which I know was greatly appreciated by her. If we could do the same thing this year, I know it would please her immensely.

It was unanimously voted that love and thanks should go to Mrs. Gregg, and that the Convention give expression to its feeling by sending flowers, to be "expressive of our missing her to-day and of our feeling for her."

MR. HARGROVE: I would like, if I may, to say a word in regard to Dominguez Acosta, of whose death we have heard. Unfortunately, circumstances do not permit a public tribute to his memory, but I want to tell you some things about him and his service of the Cause, which are confidential and cannot be allowed to appear in the Convention report. (At the end of Mr. Hargrove's brief tribute, the members rose, as a silent tribute to the memory of a courageous comrade.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I shall ask Mr. Hargrove to take the Chair while I report on the affairs of the Treasurer. The financial statement for the year is as follows:

Report of the Treasurer, Theosophical Society

April 25, 1919—*April* 23, 1920

GENERAL FUND, AS PER LEDGER

Receipts		*Disbursements*	
Dues from Members	$609.20	Secretary's Office	$138.70
Subscriptions and Donations to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY	841.00	Printing and mailing THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY (four numbers)	1,963.46
General Contributions	562.95	Expense of Subscription Department of QUARTERLY	28.06
	$2,013.15	Stationery, etc.	10.08
Deficit April 20, 1920	408.70	Miscellaneous (rents, etc)	135.10
			$2,275.40
		Deficit April 24, 1919	146.45
	$2,421.85		$2,421.85

Digitized by Google

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(Including Special Accounts)

General Fund

Receipts	$2,013.15	Disbursements	$2,421.85
Deficit April 23, 1920	408.70		
	$2,421.85		$2,421.85

Special Publication Account

Balance April 24, 1919	$312.00	Balance April 23, 1920	$312.00

Discretionary Expense Account

Balance April 24, 1919	$483.00	Balance April 24, 1920	-483.00
			$795.00
Deficit in General Fund April 23, 1920			408.70
		Final Balance April 23, 1920	$386.30
On deposit in Corn Exchange Bank, April 23, 1920		$396.30	
Outstanding checks, uncashed		10.00	
			$386.30

April 23, 1920. HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL, *Treasurer.*

THE TREASURER: We began the year with a deficit of $146.00, which was very generously more than made up before the Convention was ended, but which, nevertheless, stood on our financial statement as a deficit for that year. Those very generous donations which the Treasurer received at the time of our last Convention have been included here under the title of general contributions. That is why we show the deficit reported last year, though it was wiped out in twenty-four hours. This year the deficit is $400.00, that is, in two years we have spent $400 more than we have received. The reason for it is quite simple: several years ago, namely in April, 1915, printing the QUARTERLY, per issue, cost $260.00. In January, 1920 (the last number of the QUARTERLY included in this budget), the printing of an edition of exactly the same size, cost $516. The cost, therefore, of the QUARTERLY for the same number of pages and copies, irrespective of increase, has doubled. This magazine is, as you know, one of our chief means of keeping in contact with our own members, and it is one of our chief means of making our ideals known to a wider circle. Our total receipts for the year were roughly $2,000.00; our expenditures for printing $1,960. A small expense for rent and light, stationery, etc., must be added, but I know of no organization, anywhere, in which so much is done for so little, and where all service is so purely one of gift.

There were two special accounts—the Special Publication Account and the Discretionary Expense Account—of $314 and $483, respectively, which stood over and above the General Fund in our bank account, for special purposes. It is from loans from these special funds that our deficit has been carried. So that the $408.70 has been met by advances from those special accounts, and thus, instead of being in debt, we have, including the special accounts, $386 in the bank. But the special accounts are owed by the General Fund $408, which represents the excess of our expenditures over our income.

Digitized by Google

In presenting the report I must express my very deep gratitude, and let you know how much gratitude you owe, to the Assistant Treasurer, who has done all the work. I but get up here and make the report; Miss Youngs is the proper recipient of a very real vote of thanks from this Convention.

Moved by Mr. Woodbridge and seconded by Mr. Auchincloss that the report of the Treasurer be accepted with thanks to him and to the Assistant Treasurer. Carried. (Professor Mitchell resumed the Chair.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not know whether the Convention wishes to discuss raising the price of the QUARTERLY. In that case we should no longer be in the proud position pointed out in the Secretary's report, of being the only concern that has not raised its prices. I doubt whether raising the price to non-members would make much difference. About three hundred dollars come in during the year from sales and subscriptions to the QUARTERLY, which do not come from our own members. To double the price might make a difference of three hundred dollars—I doubt if it would make that much. Certainly not more, and that would not be enough. Therefore I doubt if it would be wise. We are in the position now that we have always been in, in our "healthy" days, when we have to rely entirely upon the generosity and enthusiasm of our members, and the gifts they make over and above the payment of dues. With the good will that is here to-day, I know that were it necessary to do so, I, as Treasurer, would only have to ask and the deficit would be more than made up. But it is not even necessary to ask, and therefore it seems needless to make any change now in our dues or charges.

MR. HARGROVE: I was informed, just before the Convention, that the deficit has been made up. In other words there is no idea of passing the hat round.

May I suggest that in years gone by, it was always our practice at this Convention and at about this time to have the enormous pleasure of listening to a speech from Mr. Griscom. He used to report on the QUARTERLY and his report was a peg on which to hang something from himself which we all wanted to hear. I think it would be a good thing for us to stand, happily, to vote him thanks for his work on the QUARTERLY. It would not exist to-day if it had not been for him. (A rising vote, members and delegates standing for a moment in reverent silence.)

THE CHAIRMAN: The next business is the report of the Committee on Nominations.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MR. PERKINS: There are two memberships on the Executive Committee which expire this year, and the Committee on Nominations recommends that Judge McBride, of Indianapolis, and Colonel Knoff, of Kristiania, be the candidates for re-election to these two vacancies in the membership of the Committee.

The nominations of a Committee needing no seconding, the question was put to the Convention and passed unanimously.

The Committee further recommended that all the other officers be retained in their present positions for the ensuing year; and the Secretary was instructed to cast a single ballot for:

Secretary, Mrs. Ada Gregg
Assistant-Secretary, Miss Isabel E. Perkins
Treasurer, Mr. Henry Bedinger Mitchell
Assistant-Treasurer, Miss Martha E. Youngs

MR. HARGROVE: May I ask if I might be authorized by the Convention to send a telegram to Judge McBride in the name of the Convention, thanking him for his message and expressing our appreciation of his long membership, and also our regards? Voted upon and passed unanimously.

Digitized by Google

MR. JOHNSTON: I think we might also at the same time write a very cordial letter to Colonel Knoff, who had hoped to be at this Convention, and those of us who know him personally were looking forward to meeting a very splendid and veteran member of this Society. Strikes prevented the sailing of his ship.

Let us write and announce his re-election, and tell him how disappointed we are and that we hope he will come over next year, strikes or no strikes.

THE CHAIRMAN: I should like to propose that a cable also be sent to Dr. Keightley expressing our thanks for his greetings.

After announcements regarding the afternoon session, the evening meeting of the New York Branch, and the lecture Sunday afternoon, the Convention adjourned until 2.30 p. m.

AFTERNOON SESSION

THE CHAIRMAN: Our first business this afternoon is the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LETTERS OF GREETING

DR. CLARK: We have letters of greeting from Branches in Europe, in South America and in our own country. These letters all have a common note. They speak of the efforts of the Black Lodge in a more subtle, underhand way, to get control of things in the world, after they have been thwarted openly; and of the great need of the Society in this Convention to take its stand against those efforts. This is only a brief summary of their contents. The letters themselves, which will be published in the QUARTERLY, will, I am sure, bear out this summary of them. Colonel Knoff's makes very direct reference to an unwillingness to take a positive and definite stand, which he finds very characteristic of the so-called intellectual classes.

MR. HARGROVE: I think it would be interesting if we could perhaps hear, from the Committee on Letters of Greeting, from whom the letters have come—to remind us of old friends more than anything else.

Dr. Clark then announced that letters had been received from Colonel T. H. Knoff, of Kristiania; Mrs. E. H. Lincoln, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, England; Mr. J. W. G. Kennedy, of London; Mr. Hjalmar Julin, of Arvika, Sweden (whose long and valued service of the T. S. was commented upon); Mr. Othmar Köhler, of Aussig; Mr. J. J. Benzo, of Caracas; Dr. D. Salas Baiz, of Sanfernando de Apure; Mr. Manning, of Cincinnati; Mr. A. L. Leonard, of Los Angeles.

Moved by Mr. Acton Griscom, and duly seconded, that the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting be accepted with thanks. Carried.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

MR. HARGROVE: *Mr. Chairman and Fellow Members:*

I. Our first resolution is that Mr. Johnston, as Chairman of the Executive Committee, be authorized to reply to the letters of greeting. Carried.

II. Our second resolution: that this Convention of the Society authorize visits of the officers of the Society to the Branches. Carried.

III. Third, that the thanks of the Convention and of the Society be extended to the New York Branch for the hospitality received. Carried.

Digitized by Google

The fourth resolution of last year read as follows:

"Whereas, At the Convention in 1915 following the outbreak of the War, The Theosophical Society declared

"'(a) That war is not of necessity a violation of Brotherhood, but may on the contrary become obligatory in obedience to the ideal of Brotherhood; and

"'(b) That individual neutrality is wrong if it be believed that a principle of righteousness is at stake.' . . .

"Be it Resolved, That compromise with evil is as wrong as is neutrality; and that Bolshevism is the very opposite of Brotherhood and of all for which The Theosophical Society stands."

I think it is very much in order to read out that resolution of last year, because it reminds us that the T. S. is not a static thing, but a growing thing, and that the resolution which I expect we shall adopt this afternoon is the direct outcome of the spirit and purpose that are embodied in the resolution of 1919.

And now we come to the major resolution of to-day. First of all, I would like to know whether there is any need to read out the letters and resolutions that were read by Mr. Johnston this morning? [*No.*] I think it would be merely wasting your time. Keeping in mind, therefore, as you will be good enough to do, the resolutions which were passed by the Executive Committee, which, instead of taking drastic action as it is authorized to do under the Constitution and By-Laws, preferred to give you the opportunity to debate and consider the question; bearing in mind the terms of that resolution, and that it was referred to you, and that the charter of the Berlin Branch was suspended and the diplomas of the German members suspended,—you are asked to go one step further, and to cancel that charter and to expel those German members.

Your Committee asks you to adopt the following resolution:

Pursuant to the action of the Executive Committee, and confirming the self-expulsion of certain German members, be it

RESOLVED, That the Charters of the Berlin Branch in Germany and of the Dresden Branch in Germany, are hereby cancelled, and that the Charters of all other Branches of The Theosophical Society, if any, which adopt or approve the attitude of said Berlin and Dresden Branches shall at once be cancelled by the Executive Committee of the Society;

RESOLVED, That all members of the Society who have endorsed the attitude of said German Branches are hereby expelled, and that all other members, if any, who may hereafter take similar action shall at once be expelled by the Executive Committee.

I do not see that there is need for me to say much more. Mr. Johnston, this morning, merely stated the facts. Partly because those facts speak for themselves, partly on account of the lucidity of his statement, it would appear to me that argument is not needed. At the same time, we want to hear all opinions. Purposely, your Committee on Resolutions refrained from the usual series of reasons given under the head of "Whereas." We want your speeches to take the place of the reasons; we want the whole question considered, not only with an eye to the present, but with an eye to the future. From my own standpoint we shall be doing the right and the only possible thing. We are not doing it as against the Germans whom we expel. We are doing it as the only brotherly

Digitized by Google

thing that can be done under the circumstances. We are doing it to defend the parent body, and that which is done for The Theosophical Society must, in the end, be for the good of those against whom the action is taken. When people do not belong organically to this Society, it is bad for them that they should belong nominally. However, that is not the main motive. The motive is, first, that we have to consider the ideal of what is right, in and for itself. Second, we have to think of the Society; and those of us who have had the immense privilege of long membership, those of us who feel that these Conventions celebrate once more the unfurling of the battle-worn standard of the T. S., are not prepared to see the Society injured if we can help it. You, of course, feel that way too. You love the Society; you know its history; you have fought for it, suffered for it, perhaps. You feel a sense of responsibility; you know as well as I do that in any organism corruption breeds corruption. Corruption tolerated is contagious. It is our duty to think of that, to think of the name, of the honour of the Society.

Supposing there were anyone here in New York, nominally a member of the Society, but whose life was notoriously evil, would it not be our duty to expel him from the ranks, simply to protect the honour of the Society and the good name of Theosophy? Would you permit that name to be dragged through the mud if you could help it—to be exposed to dishonour? Supposing that a Branch stands openly, defiantly, for all that Germany has done; supposing that a Branch turns around on the parent body and accuses the parent body of being a thing of evil, is there more than one course open to that parent body? There is not. And I want to remind you that this has been the attitude of the Masters of all ages, the Masters of the East and of the West. You will remember, doubtless, that in the old Vinaya texts of Buddhism there is provision made by Buddha himself for the expulsion of a member of his Order, for a variety of reasons. In those days they did not have a Constitution and By-Laws, as we have to-day. Buddha laid down Rules for his Order as events developed the need for rules. So in the Maha Vagga it is stated that one of the members of his Order had sinned, and that when this was called to the attention of the Buddha, he stated that if any member of the Society were to commit theft, were to commit murder, were a liar, were to speak against the Dharma (that is, against the spirit of Theosophy, the Law), were to speak against the Sangha (that is, against the Society itself), "in these cases I prescribe, O Bhikkus, that you expel him from the Society." So there is the mild and gentle Buddha, whose teaching is based upon universal love, but who thought of righteousness first; who placed justice above sentimentality, and who, because he was a Master, was not afraid of doing what was right. So I submit to you that it is our duty to-day to perform this unpleasant but necessary surgical operation.

MR. AUCHINCLOSS: Mr. Lloyd George says, in this morning's paper, that Germany is sick; and that she must be treated very gently until she is well. He is perfectly right about her being sick, but very wrong about the way she ought to be treated. There is the same hypocrisy now that there was during the War; the same bosh, the same disloyalty to principle, in haste to resume business relations; one hears it on all sides. And the last piece of hypocrisy is the request that they be allowed to keep a standing army of 200,000 men until the other nations have disarmed. That same hypocrisy lies back of the resolution of Mr. Raatz and his followers. They have no desire to atone, no repentance. They would do it all over again if they could; they are making their plans for that all the time. It is a question of principle, not of dogma. The Theosophical Society exists to help the souls of mankind. It has its face set against anything that is going to prevent that. It must attack anything that is going to prevent it. Mr. Raatz and his followers are standing for the spirit of Germany. Until they have changed, they simply do not belong to the Society; they have expelled themselves, and any expulsion by the Society is simply a matter of form—they are out now.

Digitized by Google

DR. CLARK: What those German letters brought up in my mind were the old words, "If the salt have lost his savour." What is the world to-day without the Society? The Society is just a small piece of leaven to bring something good out of the mass of evil that is around us everywhere. It seems to me that these letters are the arguments of that old wolf in the fable who had made up his mind that he was going to eat the lamb, and it did not matter whether it was the lamb or the lamb's mother. We have seen Germany try to get possession of everything else that was good; here is the deliberate effort to get possession of the leaven, of the salt, of the thing that will preserve that which so much needs to be preserved. The action expressed in this resolution is the only action that is possible. It is a crisis; and a crisis is not a thing that admits of deliberations back and forth. It calls for immediate action. You cannot write notes in a crisis. Your principles are supposed to have been formed and you act upon them. That letter from Dresden is so outrageous, so thoroughly German, that while this expulsion happens to be a matter of words, I hope we can put so much intention back of it that they will really feel our meaning and purpose.

MR. WOODBRIDGE: One of the very first lessons that anybody who comes into the Society gets is to be tolerant to another person's point of view; and when I first heard this proposed action, I wondered how we were going to four-square it with the doctrine of being tolerant. The only possible tolerance is to give the Germans an opportunity to repent. My next thought was, here is an intensely funny thing—really funny—people arrogating to themselves the possession of righteousness; a kind of sublimated Jack Horner pie! I realized that those letters might have been turned around and written by us to them; they show things upside down—a perversion. Their last letter is a declaration of war.

In the world to-day we can see very striking signs of an unrelenting campaign against everything that is decent:—Violence, foulness, materialism cropping out in every direction. It does not stop on the lower plane; you find it among people who ought to know better,—like noxious sewer gas it creeps up to destroy people. False doctrines of brotherhood are used by those who mean to throw off all decency, all law and order. There is a tendency to condone evil, and wherever we look we see some movement to divide man from what is decent. And now it has the audacity, the wicked courage to lift its evil head against the T. S. It is not a question of tolerance. These people are open enemies, and now are attacking the Society under their black flag. And so, as Theosophists, we have got to stand for the truth, got to attack the people who avow a lie and call it truth, who lift the standard of murder and call it kindness. I think it is a privilege to speak for the resolution.

MR. MILLER: As I heard that last letter I found myself completely unable to understand the point of view of one who could write it. But it impressed me as being, like so many of the documents which appeared during the War, typically German, and another indication of the fact that the German to-day is unrepentant and unchanged. I think that one of the things noticeable in these documents is their hypocrisy. They have gone out of their way to find an excuse on which to base their action in the name of a protest against dogma. They have protested that the resolution of 1915 was a violation of the spirit of brotherhood;—they show their hypocrisy by taking the last lines of the *Key to Theosophy* to find excuse for their action. If they had read the *Key* carefully they would have found in the early pages a statement to the effect that those who join the Society look in vain for any dogma; its only creed is loyalty to truth and its ritual to serve every truth by its use. It seems to me that this is a question of loyalty to the eternal principles upon which the Society was founded—upon loyalty to truth—and that is where we are at the parting of the ways.

MR. SAXE: I agree entirely with the previous speakers, though the matter appears to me from a slightly different angle. The first object of the Society is

Digitized by Google

the forming of a nucleus of universal brotherhood. This consists not in a community of outward interests, not in identity of dogmas, not in that we believe in reincarnation or some other doctrine, but our bond is that we all have a common aim—which is to approach one centre, one light. As we do that, as we come, each one on his own path, approaching the centre as the spokes of the wheel the hub, we come closer to each other, and in that way we find in time that we have an actual brotherhood, a relationship. This is increasingly so as we progress. And in order to do this we study, we have meetings, read books, and so forth. The aim in all ways is to find out what will help us to make that progress and what holds us back. From time to time problems come up, obstacles of one kind or another. Times come when it is necessary to talk things over and make certain decisions which are vital to the success of the Movement. Supposing that at a certain point a crisis arises; the members convene to consider the thing carefully and deliberately; they take a step which to them is obviously the only one to take. Then one or more members, after having plenty of time to consider the matter, without any possible excuse for not understanding the situation, say that the view taken by the members as a whole is wrong; that what they see as white is black—what they see as North is South. What can you do? Can you compromise and say that both views are right? Obviously you cannot. If you do, what would the result be to the protesting members themselves? Only confusion; compromise has become impossible. The only thing to do is to take a definite stand and say: "If you see as white what we see as black the only thing for you to do is to leave us." I agree entirely with the motion and the speakers who preceded me.

MR. PERKINS: It seems to me that we are talking about an entirely natural process here to-day—not something strange or unusual. I wish we had a microscope here and a nucleus, one of those little nuclei of the organic world. If we had one and put it under the microscope, and watched the field of the microscope with the intense light that beats there;—it might happen that some little black microbes of disease and anarchy and hell would come along. What then should we see? Something very simple and very natural. We should see the nucleus pause for just a moment to take notice that something foreign, evil by its very nature, aimed against the life of that nucleus, was present:—then we should see that little organism contract, close up for just an instant, and right after that those black microbes of disease would be—where? Outside the nucleus!

We have here another example of exactly the same thing. We who have been members for even a few years, know that the T. S. is in point of fact the fighting line. When things are going along smoothly, what happens? Those who are actively on the fighting line are separated by intervals, and occasionally across the gap comes some word—"Are you there?" But when, in response to attack, the forces of evil turn around and attack in turn, what happens. The spaces that have separated those on the fighting line exist no longer. They draw together until they are touching shoulder to shoulder, and along the line the pressure increases and something gets forced out; something that does not belong there, something that cannot stand the pressure, something that is traitorous, something that has shown itself to be part and parcel of the agents of the Black Lodge.

It is all very well to see at the present moment when everything is clear, but we must do more. Mr. Hargrove, Mr. Johnston, and Professor Mitchell have called attention to the fact that it is important, not only to-day but in the light of the future, that we should all understand what we are doing and why we are taking action, in carrying out the resolution of the Committee. It means that the claim on the part of these former German members of the Society, that at the 1915 Convention the Society adopted dogma, is a very old story. Like everything else, the T. S. has been reborn several times; in fact it is one of the best illustrations of re-birth. We must distinguish between dogma and principle. Dogma is a

Digitized by Google

mental statement of a belief, the statement of an opinion. Was that resolution that was passed in 1915 a statement of opinion or was it a statement of everlasting principle, a thing which always has been true and always will be true? What are the German members, in those letters, asking us to believe? Do they expect us to believe the story that, as Mr. Woodbridge has said, was too silly for a child to tell? They indicate that, because the 1915 resolutions were, as they claim, matters of dogma, the Masters of Wisdom have been so horrified as to withdraw from the Society. Yet apparently, in their opinion, those Masters paid no attention to the sinking of the Lusitania, the violation of Belgian neutrality, the horrors in France; all those things they appear to think that the Masters have passed over without a thought, a word, an expression. Silly? A thing to be laughed at if it were not so serious. But we must remember that in the years gone by, this Society has come to a parting of the ways, more than once, where it has been necessary to see these things clearly, to distinguish between mere individual opinion about something and an expression of one of the great laws of life.

On what, in our hearts, are we, in this case, to decide whether it is a matter of dogma or of principle? We do not have to take a statement from others. We have heard their letters. We know in our own hearts the source from which they emanated. Why do we know, why do we recognize them as the expression of everything that is evil? Because we know the evil in our own hearts. Why do I know that they are based upon an attempt of hypocrisy, of falsehood; the attempt to mislead? Because in my own heart I know that same devil, the attempt to deceive, to draw the herring across the trail, when I have done wrong and have been caught at it. That is why I know what is back of those letters. I know the devil inside, and there is no argument about it.

Going through the woods you see little foot marks in the trail. You cannot tell sometimes whether it is the footprint of a deer or a pig; their footprints are very much alike. But if you catch sight of the two animals you know, because the action of the two animals is entirely different. We know the difference between the action of the Masters of wisdom—the action of the Powers of Light, the powers of the spiritual world, the powers of the higher nature in our own selves, in our own hearts—and the action of the powers of darkness. We know it as a matter of experience; and as a matter of experience, I should like to second this resolution, that we vote to expel these foreign organisms that are deadly to the life of the Society which we love and to all that we know it stands for.

MR. LADOW: I think that as we listened to that infamous letter, we all must have remembered the efforts of Germany to place the blame for the invasion of Belgium on the "terrible plot" which Belgium had been indulging in against the Germans. The hyprocrisy in itself would not be so depressing if there were not added to it a very real force. Mr. Woodbridge said that this is a declaration of war. It is a declaration of the continuance of war by the Black Lodge. The children of darkness are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Obedience of the forces of evil to their own end is opposed by a spirit of dallying and false tolerance on the part of those who should stand for the forces of light. It is the duty of The Theosophical Society to take a definite stand and definite action against that sort of thing.

MR. ACTON GRISCOM: In all the reading which I have been able to do in what I might describe as Theosophical literature, I have never seen anything about toleration of principle. We are to tolerate the opinions of others, but I have never found that we are to tolerate the principles of others. I was very much amused at the definition which Webster's Dictionary (edition of 1874) gives of the word opinion, as applied particularly to what has just been suggested by Mr. Perkins. It says, "Opinion, a mental conviction of the truth of some statement,

Digitized by Google

founded on a low degree of probable evidence." Those nineteen German members, and the letter from Herr Toepelmann, informed us very subtly that the Masters, after we passed the resolution in 1915, had withdrawn, and that they hoped that if we passed their resolution withdrawing the previous one, the Masters will then again accord to us their grace and power and help. It is quite obvious that there is a low degree of probable evidence involved in such a statement, and therefore that statement of theirs is not a statement of principle but of opinion. I think that this question, in one sense, can be boiled down to a clear understanding of the difference between a statement of opinion and of principle, because a statement of opinion which pretends to be a statement of principle becomes thereby a dogma, and may very well be misleading unless what lies back of the statement is clearly recognized. By their fruits ye shall know them. A statement of principle which, on the face of it, expresses opinions based on a lack of information proves that there is no genuine righteous principle back of that statement.

I also felt very warmly towards Dr. Clark's closing remarks, and have not been able myself to think of a phrase which would convey the same idea as tactfully and in such a restrained way. I cannot do better, therefore, than endorse most heartily what he said.

Mr. Woodbridge: Looking at the picture of Mr. Griscom a little while ago, and thinking how he would blaze over such letters as those we are discussing, I was reminded of something he once said: that there was one gift, and only one, which God had given us, which could not be taken away from us. If we go back, we shall find the Germans attempting to do what God cannot do, and that is take from us the right to choose between good and evil. If a man joins the T. S. he does not thereby lose the right to moral choice.

Miss Hohnstedt: Mr. Woodbridge said that if we would look, we should find that much condoning of evil is prevalent. That is also my experience. People say to me, "I see that the T. S. 'four hundred' will not receive our Society if we stand for what they call evil"—implying that we are too censorious. I am glad that we are known to have standards. It was Mr. Auchincloss, I think, who spoke of the German nation as sick. It is sick, and I know just enough about the medical profession to know that if they see a cancerous growth, they cut it out. They do not delude themselves into thinking that they can turn it into good healthy tissue by keeping it.

Mrs. Gitt: From one angle, why do we trouble about this resolution? The Germans have expelled themselves; they have made of themselves foreign bodies,—parasites. Was it not said by a great Master—He who is not with me is against me? They are no longer Theosophists, because they are not adhering, as I see it, to the principles under which they came into the Society. They have done wrong, and with all their "brass" they want to drag us over into their way of thinking. They are trying to pull brotherhood to pieces. The way the Germans treated Belgium should have made all those members in Germany stand up openly, in indignation against such warfare. I think the T. S. as an organization has been very patient to give them time and the chance to see what really happened. Now they have had their chance, and I think we should hurt them if we gave them further opportunity to talk to us about the matter. They should no longer be allowed audience by the T. S.

Dr. Stedman: I was especially interested in the Dresden letter because it is so much in accord with the letters I have recently been reading from Germany, in my capacity as editor of a professional periodical. Every mail brings me letters asking for a renewal of relations—with no idea that there could be any bar to

Digitized by Google

our going back onto the old footing with Germans. In all those letters the writers either excuse themselves or accuse us,—speaking contemptuously of the "crazy war psychology that fills America to-day." That extraordinary attitude appears to be typical of the German wherever you find him. The Dresden letter to this Convention seems to me to be full confirmation of their solidarity with unrepentant Germany.

THE CHAIRMAN here stated that there were some things on his mind which he very much wished to say, not in his official capacity, but as a member of the T. S. He therefore requested Mr. Hargrove to take the Chair, and, being recognized by the provisional chairman, made the following remarks:

PROFESSOR MITCHELL: What has been said leaves it entirely clear as to the necessity of our taking the action that has been recommended to us, carrying out the action already taken by the Executive Committee. I believe there can be no two opinions—as there have certainly been no two voices—as to what our course should be. The only question, therefore, that concerns us is how to take that course in such a way that it will not be capable of being misunderstood when our successors have not the living animal in action (to use Mr. Perkins' figure), but only his footprint as it exists in the past. How are we to be sure that the record which we leave by our action here to-day, the precedent that we establish, will be of such a nature as not to be misunderstood by those who come after us? That is part of our responsibility. In our hands is the life-work of our predecessors. We are to pass on the fruit and seed of their age-long sacrifice and effort. We are responsible for the continuance of the right tradition within the Society. If we take this action and do not make it entirely clear why we are taking it and how, it is quite possible that we shall be establishing an unfortunate precedent.

Let us therefore look more closely into this question of precedent, and the possible misunderstanding which could exist as to our motive. Let us be clear first, that this action is a grave and important question, in that it tends to define more definitely just what the Society is. The German attitude has been that clearer definition was unfortunate. We sought to define more clearly what the Society was in 1915. The resolutions then passed have been read—and yet I want you to pause and consider them, because those are the resolutions that we are asked to withdraw. Individual neutrality is not right when it is believed that a question of righteousness is at stake. Consider the opposite: individual neutrality is right, proper, in accord with Theosophical principles, when the individual believes that the question presents a direct opposition between right and wrong. It is then right for him to be inactive. Do we wish to define The Theosophical Society more sharply, in such a way that that definition will tell us that The Theosophical Society believes it to be right to be indifferent between right and wrong? We need only state the question to see how impossible it is.

Next, we are asked to withdraw our statement that war need not be a violation of brotherhood, but may be necessary in obedience to the dictates of brotherhood. Let us see what objection to war was raised by members in Germany at a time when German armies were overrunning Belgium and when she had forced the vilest war in history on Europe, for no other purpose than that of her own aggrandizement,—for a larger place in the sun for herself; committing every unspeakable as well as speakable atrocity upon women and children, and utterly disregarding all the rights of decency. Germany was then preaching to its own people the doctrine of the superman; that their duty was to themselves and that their own good was alone worthy of consideration. To all other peoples they were preaching pacifism; their agents spread through this country, preaching, in the name of brotherhood, pacifism, neutrality, the rights of the labouring man; spreading discord and class hatred in the name of brotherhood. That act alone constituted an absolute prostitution of all for which The Theosophical Society

Digitized by Google

stands. That act alone put those guilty of it, if consciously guilty, outside of membership in the Society.

Why was it we waited from 1915 to 1920 to take action? That is part of the precedent here established. Not because we were in doubt as to the character of the act, but about the conscious responsibility of our German members. We could not know then, with surety, how conscious the authors of the Berlin protest were of the nature of their own action; how conscious they were of the prostitution of the name of brotherhood, of the name of The Theosophical Society. And now we do know. We have not judged them. We have left them to judge themselves. Here, after five years, when all the world has had the opportunity of knowing what Germany was guilty of in Belgium, how the war was forced on Europe; when their own Government, which committed that act, has been overthrown so that they have no longer the pretext of loyalty to their own leaders,—yet they repeat their protest. It is not against the action of the German armies, not against the action of the German Government:—the unspeakable atrocities, the prostitution of the name of brotherhood which has spread Bolshevism through the world, they ignore in silence. What they protest against is the action of The Theosophical Society in saying that it is every man's duty to stand for right, as *he* sees it. We did not define the right. We merely put it to the individual that he himself could not remain inert, indifferent, a neutral, when he himself believed that a principle of righteousness was at stake; could not remain inert when he knew that force was being used against the helpless and that every principle of righteousness was being overridden. We stand to-day upon that clearer definition of the T. S.; we stand here facing the judgment that those German members have made of themselves (because there are other German members whose conclusions are the opposite of those expressed in the letters read to us). We are under the necessity of taking action with regard to those expressions. Whatever action we take will, in itself, tend to define more clearly the nature of the Society, as life itself forces the definition of every man's character in each conscious choice he is compelled to make. It is necessarily a sharper manifestation of the nature of The Theosophical Society, not in dogma, but in principle, in action. What action do we take? The principle, or motive, or guide we have for that action has been very clearly stated in what has been put before us to-day. Plato stated it: It is not difference of opinion that separates men, it is difference of aim and of ideal. The Theosophical Society is not something that is static, but dynamic. It has a goal, an aim, a purpose; and it purposes to press toward them and to attain them. Those are our companions who seek that goal,—irrespective of blindness, irrespective of faults, of weakness, of error. We welcome the companionship of all who press toward the goal toward which we also press. On high authority it was once said that we could exclude no one. Is it the same thing to exclude as to expel? No! Let us assume that someone who has sinned, is weak, comes to us professing universal brotherhood as we conceive of it. Are we to exclude him because he is less good, less wise or less strong than we? Or because he has some queer opinion about the Church in Ceylon or about the relation of Buddhism to Shintoism, or something else? Who are we to judge? We are not to exclude him for anything of the sort. We are to welcome him and give him his opportunity. But if, having done that, he makes it evident by his own acts that the goal he seeks is wholly different from what we seek; that he is using words as we do not use them; if under the same names he is seeking different ideals which are the opposite of those we seek,—then we must recognize the fact that he is not our companion. There is no religion higher than the truth, and we must register it.

Let us look at the way in which the German members have written themselves down; let us ask ourselves whether their statement that our resolution was a dogma (a matter of opinion, something against the ideals of the Society) is evi-

Digitized by Google

dence that they are moving toward *our* goal? If so, let us keep them; if not, they have no part with us. They have made it manifest that their aim is not ours. We are not travelling the same road. To try to move together is for us mutually to neutralize all possible progress.

We are establishing a precedent. We are doing more than that. We are endeavouring to fulfil a very serious trusteeship—the trusteeship of this Society, of Madame Blavatsky, of Mr. Judge, of Mr. Griscom, of many old members. What is our duty there? What would we have our successors conceive to be their duty? We want them to be very keenly aware of their responsibility, of the fact that each action they take will tend to define this trust of theirs, tend to shape what we have left, what we have poured our lives into. Yet we do not want them to be indifferent to another aspect of the case—we do not want them to be so afraid of action that they will let others act toward evil in the name of their trust. Do we wish to let Mr. Paul Raatz and his followers continue to represent The Theosophical Society, as unwilling to pronounce that it is a man's duty to take definite action for what he sees to be right? Are we willing for that to be spread throughout Europe as the ideal for which Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge and our other great companions gave their lives? If not, we must expel those German members.

Expulsion: are we establishing a new precedent there? Are we imposing an artificial definition on the Society, or registering a perception of its own inherent character? Whatever the Society is, it is a living organism, living with the lives given to it in the past. It is for us to see to-day that it fulfils its own nature. Is expulsion an unfortunate precedent, or may it become an unfortunate precedent? Is it something foreign to the nature of The Theosophical Society? Obviously not—first, because provision for it exists in the Constitution. Then there must be occasions, of such a nature that the duty of expulsion would become clearly ours, necessary to be exercised. Has it ever been exercised in the past? Yes, again and again. As we may read in *Lucifer,* Volume V, page 251 (1889), over Madame Blavatsky's own signature: " . . . It is now a matter of official record that the Branch of this name was discharted only in May of the present year, and its President . . . , expelled by the American Section of the General Council of the T. S." It is not a new precedent we are making, but an old one that we are following. We are following it for the same reason, because those who were expelled made it unmistakably clear over their own signatures, that they are pursuing an aim, a purpose, an ideal opposite to that for which the T. S. stands.

How will our attitude affect the German members who are expelled? That point has been touched upon. Would it be right to leave them in any doubt as to our conviction of their complete antagonism to the T. S. and all for which it stands? Do we not at least owe the truth to our former comrades? How would silence on our part affect those German members who have seen more clearly, expressed their regret, accepted in full the resolution passed in 1915, and see it as an ideal expressive of the principle animating The Theosophical Society? What would be the effect on those members if we showed only indifference to the action of Mr. Raatz and his followers, if we were to leave them to fight against that attitude in Germany, unaided by us,—leave them alone to champion our ideals with no expression from us as to which of the two sides we are on? Would that be a precedent that we should wish to leave for our successors?

Surely that would not be an expression of our ideal. Whether we consider how it would affect our members all over the world, or how it would affect the Lodge of Masters, there can be no doubt of the action we should take. If the speeches that have been made are regarded as the reasons for our action, I do not think there could be any doubt in the future as to the nature of the precedent we are establishing. For my own part, it is a precedent that I am glad to see made just as clear as we can make it.

MR. GRANT: While I shall certainly vote affirmatively when we come to vote

Digitized by Google

on this resolution, I want to speak here of a point affecting the manner in which we shall take action. I think we should make it very clear that we are not expelling those German members because they have said that we have undertaken to force a dogma on them. I can understand that there are many good people, kindly at heart, who honestly believe that war and brotherhood are incompatible. We do not want to appear to be denying such people the right to hold that view, and yet remain good members of the T. S. I think we should make it very clear to all the Branches that we are not expelling those German members on any such grounds. This seems to me the more important because their letters are put in such form as to make it appear that we are trying to foist a dogma on them. We are not. We must therefore leave no loophole there, which would enable people in the future to say, "Well, those Germans were right in part, for certainly the principles of the T. S. gave them a right to hold their own opinions and to expect tolerance for them from their fellow members."

THE CHAIRMAN: I should like to answer, as Chairman of the Convention, that there is only one binding object in the Society. It is not a matter of conscience that all members endorse verbatim every declaration of the T. S. Our only binding object is to form a nucleus of universal brotherhood.

MR. JOHNSTON: I think that what I said this morning made entirely clear, both my view and my conviction in this matter. But there were one or two things then out of place to say, which I should like to say now, especially as regards this matter of a nucleus of universal brotherhood which is the promise of spiritual life for future generations and races, to form which, as some of us think, the Society was instituted by Masters, with a long vision and an entirely definite purpose. What has been the history of the Society since it was founded? It has, from one point of view, been this: the formation of the centre of the nucleus as we believe by Masters themselves; then the successive approach of groups of people of many nations and religions to this nucleus, with two results;—either assimilation or extrusion from that nucleus. As it is a vital operation—not merely physically vital, but a profoundly vital spiritual operation—in every individual there is a sifting out of the elements in him which will assimilate with the nucleus and the rejection of the others. The first general movement of this kind, selection and extrusion, took place in 1884-1885. The centre of the selective movement was Madame Blavatsky, and the principle involved was really her moral and spiritual integrity. In historical fact, those who believed in that spiritual integrity were those who survived, and those who did not, did not survive. There were no Conventions—no voting, in this case, but a tremendously vital and spiritual action which worked itself out with marvellous clarity. There were some, lame ducks, neither in nor out, who had not the presence of mind to order their own funerals; they hung about for a time, but finally dropped off; the vital force working its own way out with tremendous potency. In 1887-1888 the *Secret Doctrine* was published, and the *Voice of the Silence*. New spiritual life was able to come in on account of that extrusion.

The next similar situation defined itself about 1894-1895, fifteen or twenty years after the foundation of the Society. There the point of decision really was the spiritual integrity of Mr. Judge,—these two Lodge messengers, one after the other, acting as centres of spiritual selection. Those who saw, realized and acted upon their conviction of that spiritual integrity, remained, and in their degree were assimilated and became vital parts of the nucleus. Those who did not, disappeared to various limbos of psychism, and so on, where I do not propose to stir them up.

A similar thing took place more impersonally in the spring and summer of 1898. The principle here was that of spiritual liberty. It was no longer the precise question of the integrity of a Lodge messenger, but a question of spiritual liberty as against tyranny. Again a separation of the elements took place and one could say that those who took the right side became part of the nucleus, acting with the

Digitized by Google

spiritual forces of the world,—going forward into the future. Thus we see that the kind of selection which is here involved depends on spiritual law, not on the mere question of a Convention vote.

In one or two points this is a novelty, a new situation. One point is a cause for very sincere congratulation. Take the events of 1885 and 1895: it was the minority that was right, right, not in my opinion or in yours, but by that final test, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The evil tree cannot bear good fruit. They are proven right by the fact of spiritual survival. It was the minority in 1885 who really saw the spiritual integrity of Madame Blavatsky—I am not talking of infallibility, we have no dogma of infallibility. It was a minority who took that action; who held to Madame Blavatsky. Certain very conspicuous figures did not so hold, and they disappeared in the void. In 1895 the same thing—the minority was right, and the minority expelled the majority. It is not a question of counting heads. Where there are foreign bodies to be dealt with, more or less has nothing to do with it. But the interesting fact, and the fact which I speak of as being a very happy omen, is that for the first time the cause of the angels seems to be in the majority. As was said this morning, the growth of the Society rests in the growth of its members in spiritual life. There we have the registration of it. I hope this resolution will be carried unanimously, but there is not the faintest doubt that it will have a majority vote.

We were in the minority in 1885. We were in the minority in 1895 and again in 1898. There was one other case of division, in 1905, where a group of people had the grace, the singular good manners, to withdraw.

The significant thing about this afternoon has been, not that one view was taken, or another view, but the sense of the spiritual force which went into what was said. That is the really vital thing. The singular thing has been the unanimity and the vital spiritual power that have been manifested here, on the side of the angels. So it is a novelty, a precedent in that sense; but the process of assimilation with a nucleus, of extrusion from the nucleus, has been part of the procedure from the beginning, and will be till the end of the seventh round, which I understand is some time off.

MR. HARGROVE: I should like to say first that I am sincerely glad Mr. Grant raised the point he did, when he emphasized that we are not trying to foist a dogma on the German members. No, we are not even trying to foist a principle upon them. You cannot foist principles upon people. All that has happened is that those particular German members have demonstrated that they have never assimilated the principles of Theosophy; have never understood the one and only principle of the Society,—that of brotherhood.

The German members have expelled themselves because of this final demonstration of their inability to understand and to respond to that one binding principle of the Society.

I am profoundly thankful for the attitude and feeling of the delegates and members present here this afternoon. It is so clear that the Society now has an opportunity to do that which the Allies ought to have done and failed to do, when they once got the whip hand of the military situation. The Armistice saved the skin, the hide, of the Black Lodge. If it had not been for the Armistice, if the War had been fought to a real conclusion, could we have received these letters from German members to-day? Never! But it is not only that we, as The Theosophical Society, have the opportunity to do what ought to have been done, it is that we have the opportunity to do what shall be done,—to create the mould into which the future of the world may pour itself. Because, do not forget that the struggle between the White Lodge and the Black has not come to an end. Do not forget that unfortunately, not even Germany has been beaten to the point of knowing she is beaten. This War, in some form or other, will have to be fought all over again. Yes, you may say more than that, because those of us who believe

Digitized by Google

in immortality as a fact, and not merely as a theory, may have reason for our conviction that some of us—yourselves perhaps—will be active participants in that next great struggle,—when it will be of vital importance that you and the rest of us carry over in our bones the conviction that compromise with evil does not pay. Never again an armistice with Germany! And so now we have the chance, as I say, to do that which ought to be done, to try to create a mould, a model, a pattern, into which the molten metal of the future may pour itself. Let us try to see things as they are, to see the truth. The psychology of the Black Lodge is revealed in these letters from Germany:—a smoke screen, thrown up, of accusation, of false accusation, known to be false and deliberately perpetrated to try to blind the eyes of fools. Hypocrisy, of course! Examine some of the statements that are made. The Dresden Branch says that the resolution of the 1915 Convention was passed over the heads of the German Branches, and that this is unheard-of, preposterous. Their statement is a lie, and what is more, they know it is a lie. They were represented at that Convention by proxy, represented just as much as a score of other Branches are represented at this Convention to-day. Nothing was passed over their heads. They are pretending to work themselves up into a state of indignation in order to conceal their own crimes. "The resolution of 1915 is a dogma." That is a lie and they know it is a lie. The object of the Society is to form a nucleus of universal brotherhood. If their attitude were correct in principle it would mean that, instead of the object being as you know, it should read: the object of the Society is to form a nucleus of universal brotherhood, but at the same time it is *not* to form a nucleus of universal brotherhood. The main point would be that you must not commit yourselves to anything! They talk about dogmas. If you choose to misuse the word, you could call the first object of the Society a dogma, because it suggests there should be a Brotherhood; and, misusing the word dogma, they could declare that this is a dogma. That is camouflage. It is typical of the elementals that are common to all human beings, more or less. . . . What we have to do is to keep on top of such elementals, and not permit them to get on top of us. If that be part of your problem and mine, it is also part of the problem of the Society. What you would do, if you knew how, would be to expel all the elementals from your lower nature, and that is our function to-day.

I want to read something which was not read this morning for lack of time, and that is the concluding paragraph of the letter from Mr. Raatz and eighteen other German members. It contains the same idea as that in the letter from Dresden. They say: "The undersigned are moreover convinced that the Spiritual Forces can impossibly be acting in a Theosophical Society that erred so far as to adopt a resolution of the kind. It is the conviction of the undersigned members that the Master Forces will turn again to the Society if the Convention of 1920 revokes the resolution of 1915 and therewith the dogma. It is for that reason, for the Cause of the Masters, that the undersigned beg the Convention to adopt their motion." When it comes to evoking the cause of the Masters,—to that kind of misuse of sacred terms, the situation becomes exceedingly difficult to tolerate, even mentally. It is the height of hypocrisy to pretend that the motive of the people who wrote that letter is really love of the Cause of the Masters: it is iniquitous.

No one can ever say that our action this afternoon has been railroaded through. There has been every opportunity for discussion, for due deliberation. We simply confirm that which has already happened. Those people have expelled themselves. We certify to that act of self-expulsion. They can go where they belong,—to their friends. That Black force which has inspired Germany all these years, the Lodge of Evil, will doubtless give them their reward. Mr. Chairman, I beg to move the adoption of the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN: The resolution is before you; are you ready for the question?

Digitized by Google

(There were many calls for the question, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.)

The next business, and pleasure, before the Convention is to hear from its delegates,—to hear from those who have come from a distance.

MISS HOHNSTEDT: I do not know that I can say anything new about our work in Cincinnati this year. We have been greatly handicapped by illness, influenza, which necessarily interfered with our work. Our audiences have not been larger than in previous seasons, but I think I can truly say that the enthusiasm and devotion have never been greater. We have gained one new member, and as an offset to that, one of our old members has become disaffected and I suppose will drop out of the Society. In that case, we can only take the attitude taken in the resolution passed here to-day—that if people are not going along with us toward the same goal, it is better that they should not be a nominal part of our organization.

MR. BAKER: Our Branch in Salamanca is small as well as young. We are weak, and we have yet to learn and to live Theosophy. There have been times when our problems have seemed hopeless, but we know that they are not. In those times it has helped us to remember what Mr. Griscom wrote,—that what always counts is our efforts. We have really tried.

MRS. GITT: This year I have been much interested to see what the Churches are doing to meet the wave of psychism that broke out at the end of the War. Among our ministers in Washington there are some splendid men who are spiritually developed; and it has been a wonder to me to see how inadequately they have handled this subject. What unsatisfactory explanations they have given to bereaved members of their congregations who, feeling that they had communication with their departed friends, wanted to talk it over with their pastors. They only made the situation worse than before; and I have realized how badly those ministers needed some Theosophy. Then they could have pointed the bereaved ones to the possibility of true communion with their departed friends, and to the need of purification to make such soul communion possible. The Christian Church appears to me to have lost the science of spirituality. The ministers seem to be afraid to go into the deep things of life lest, if they speak the truth plainly, they should lose their people. It seems to me that this is the only way to hold them. I have asked many how they would like to become members of a Church that only talked about the four Gospels—and they all admitted that they were getting tired of the Old Testament and of the doctrines of St. Paul. The need of the hour seems to me to be a real devotion to the life, character and teachings of the Christian Master; that is the only remedy that will serve for the healing of the nations.

MRS. SHELDON: Mrs. Gitt's remarks have aroused much thought in connection with the work of our Providence Branch this year. Our experience, as it happens, has been just the opposite of hers. We have found fruit in our study of the Old Testament and of St. Paul. We dealt with the Old Testament on the basis of articles in the old numbers of the QUARTERLY, by Mr. Johnston, and we started the season's work with the article on "Paul the Disciple," taking up the wonderful message that we felt Paul had for humanity. Then we took the Adam and Eve story, and got much from that. Next we considered the spiritual history of religions, a subject that always has much interest and beauty in it. That led us to the "Dogma of the Virgin Birth"; then we took up "Faith and Works," and that brought us back to Paul. Next came the "Tide of Life" which gave us the evolutionary scheme as presented in the *Secret Doctrine*, putting it in the light of Biblical teaching, showing how Genesis is really in accord with the teaching of modern science.

We have added sixteen members to our Branch this year, and we feel that this gain was due to the thoughtful work we have done in our study class. It has been a most satisfactory year. We have seen the Branch grow from small num-

Digitized by Google

bers to a membership of forty-one; and the number of members is not the significant thing—we feel that very spiritual work is being done through the Branch in the life of the people of Providence.

MRS. REGAN: There is little for me to say about the Hope Branch. We have gone on about the same as last year. Sickness and death have crept in, but we have maintained our meetings regularly and have been studying the "Elementary Articles" by Mr. Griscom, which we have had the pleasure of taking up from the beginning.

MISS RICHMOND: I come here as a member at large, and I am glad of the chance to say that I am thankful to be permitted once more to be here.

MRS. THOMPSON: We have had no meetings of the Blavatsky Branch for over a year. A small study class, however, has been maintained and through it we have brought one new member into the Society—and I am hoping that other things will come from this activity.

MR. GRANT: I do not know whether I am here as a member at large or as a representative of the Toronto Branch, but I am certainly glad to be here, and to get the "boost" which comes through the Convention. A chemist, like myself, has constantly to be dealing with matter, and only one who is in that position could know how much I appreciate coming into contact with life on a different plane, and with people who meet life in the spirit that has been manifested in these meetings.

MR. DANNER: We have no Branch in Pittsburgh yet, but it is a great pleasure to me and to Mrs. Danner, who is the really wide awake member, to be here, even though we have to come as visiting members. I hope that next year we may come as delegates representing a Pittsburgh Branch. After our visit last year, nothing would keep us away from Convention. I should like to add to this promise for the future, our sincere gratitude for the uplift we receive in coming into contact with people who are dealing in a way which is so helpful, with the great problems of humanity.

MR. VAIL: Whenever I can get to the meetings here it is a great inspiration, and I find that what I take back with me is a lasting influence. As I am aspiring to be a chemist, I sympathize with the member who spoke of the influence of that work on his everyday thought; it is easy to get swamped in matter. Concerning the resolutions, I heartily believe in the action we have taken. Yet I was born and raised a Quaker, and have a large number of Quaker friends who are most of them very sincere pacifists. As they would willingly give their lives for their beliefs, would be satisfied if those beliefs landed them in prison, as we heard this morning had happened to a fellow member,—they are evidently sincere. Yet I cannot but feel that they have gone wrong, that their vision is clouded. I should like to discover some way in which I could bring light to them. Certain sayings of Christ, strictly interpreted, are taken as the basis for their pacifistic standpoint. Theosophy, interpreting those same passages broadly, arrives at a diametrically opposite conclusion. I have attempted to suggest to my Quaker friends a broader viewpoint, but they tell me that I am merely getting away from the true teachings of Christianity. I think one of their mistakes must be that they confine their studies to the Gospels and to the lives of a few Quaker leaders—thus shutting away a large body of truth and experience.

MR. HARGROVE: A very interesting point has been raised by Mr. Vail. At the Branch meeting we are going to discuss Theosophy in general, and I am hoping that some member who may also be a Quaker in origin and by birth, will be willing and able to answer Mr. Vail's question. It would be well worth discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN: The gateway from the Society of Friends to The Theosophical Society is one that has been opened and through which have come some of our most earnest, faithful and valued members. Mr. Griscom, himself, was a

Digitized by Google

birthright member of the Society of Friends, and remained so to the day of his death.

The time has come for the adjournment of this Convention. The Chairman would first, however, remind you of the several meetings announced at the close of the morning session, which some present may not have heard; also that those who wish have now the opportunity to sign the "round-robin" to Mrs. Gregg.

MR. WOODBRIDGE: Once a year it is my privilege to move that the thanks of the Convention be extended to the Chairman, Secretary and Assistant Secretary.

THE CHAIRMAN: They are gratefully accepted, and this Convention stands adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS, *Secretary of Convention*
JULIA CHICKERING, *Assistant Secretary of Convention.*

LETTERS OF GREETING

Among the letters of greeting received from Branches of the Society, our space permits the publication of only the following:

Kristiania, Norway.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: The black powers lost the terrible war which they had prepared so carefully, and which they waged with such a fury and desperation. So far they have failed in their wily attempt to destroy spirituality and to increase selfishness and self-assertion on earth. But the defeat was only on the material plane. They have now hurled a tempest of lower psychic powers into the realm of the human mind, and it seems as if poor, miserable mankind were, at present, worse off than before. The man of the Western world is more than ever divided against himself, and he would soon be brought to desolation if the Gods were not always standing by, helping and protecting him. On the psychic plane the White Powers are still waging war against the black powers, and They will continue to do so till the defeat of the enemy is complete.

But the White Powers want allies in this world, and They expect to find these in The Theosophical Society which They have founded, and for so many years protected and helped and strengthened for this very purpose. They have foreseen the need of such help, and have taken the necessary steps for having it at hand when wanted. And it has, perhaps, never been so much wanted as just now, and in the immediate future.

Let us try strongly to realize this claim upon us, and though we may feel our weakness and inability to give the help that is expected, and which we so eagerly wish to give, let us do our best. Let us pray the Lord of the harvest for more labourers to be sent, and for more strength, zeal, and wisdom to do work that can bring forth a rich harvest,—for "the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few."

And let us also realize that there is no occasion for despondency, for, as Cavé has said: "Remember, child, remember . . . when men's ears are deaf and their hearts are hard and they will not turn or listen; when all your toil seems vain and the goal an endless vista,—remember the armies of Heaven marching across the sky, and the great St. Michael leading."

Let us, therefore, stick to our work with joyful endurance, for our work is our duty, our opportunity, and our greatest blessing. The crown of life is given to him that is "faithful unto death."

With cordial greetings from co-workers in Norway, I am,

Faithfully yours,

THOMAS H. KNOFF.

Digitized by Google

Arvika, Sweden.

To the Secretary T. S.: We have very little hope that the proxy and this letter will come to you before Convention. But if it come in time we ask you respectfully to convey to the members in Convention, our cordial greetings and best wishes. In thought we are with you in Convention: and we long for the time when the post will go regularly again.

Europe is in darkness, in some of its quarters even now many hundreds die of starvation every day, and the little of civilization it had is likely to go down for a long time.

Fraternally yours,

HJALMAR JULIN.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, England.

To the Members in Convention Assembled: We have much pleasure in conveying to you the hearty greetings of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Lodge. We look forward to the Convention each year and are present in spirit if not in body. We recognize the importance of such a gathering and the mutual help to be derived from it. We eagerly await the arrival of the July QUARTERLY, that we may also in some degree experience the fire, the deep enthusiasm of a great Cause.

* * * * *

With best wishes for a successful Convention, we are,

Yours fraternally,

P. DOUGLAS, *President,*
ETHEL M. LINCOLN, *Secretary.*

London, England.

To the Members in Convention Assembled: The London Lodge of The Theosophical Society has held regular meetings during the last year. Part of the *Secret Doctrine* has been read and studied; later the study of the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali was commenced. The meetings have been small but interesting, and we hope that during the coming year new vigour will be imparted to the Society. We send our united greetings to the members in Convention assembled and hope that the spirit of the Masters and the united spirit of Brotherhood will be your guide in all your deliberations.

With fraternal greetings, we are,

Yours sincerely,

NORA KENNEDY,
J. W. KENNEDY.

Caracas, Venezuela.

To the Secretary T. S.: The "Rama Venezuela" of The Theosophical Society sends its fraternal greetings to the members attending the Convention this year, and, through you, extends them to the Branches and members unable to assist at it.

All of us will be there in thought and will, united with the same aspiration, the aspiration to that unity of conscience which is to keep up the fundamental note of every soul that loves Brotherhood, and that, above all, seeks the Kingdom of God and His Justice among men.

With cordial wishes for the greatest success in the fraternal work, I remain,

Fraternally yours,

JUAN J. BENZO, *Secretary.*

Digitized by Google

Sanfernando de Apure, Venezuela.

To the Members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled: We send all of you our cordial greetings and our best wishes. There are very few events to report in the life of the Jehoshua Branch during the last year. Most of the members have been out of the city, but they have always sustained their true devotion to the Cause of the Masters.

Our president gave us a splendid surprise when he announced to us from Curaçao that he had established a Branch of the T. S. in that precious island.

We can truly tell you that that is our work in the present year. United with you in spirit and ideal we desire that the outcome of your spiritual labours may meet the needs of the world.

D. SALAS BAIZ, *President Jehoshua Branch.*

Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia.

To the Members of the Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Great is our joy to be able once again, after several black years, to send you our most fervent wishes and greetings for the Convention.

With genuine contrition we approach you, and beg your pardon that we were not able during the first year of the World War to stand whole-heartedly on your side, and to feel with fervent passion for the cause you saw as underlying the outer war and for which you fought. We have to admit our inability to accept promptly the help so generously offered from the wiser friends and leading members of The Theosophical Society. We did not realize the deep significance of this Great War; we did not comprehend the real, underlying issue of it. Unprepared for the thought that this war was "A royal Battle," ordered from the Silent Watcher; and drilled by the thought to obey to authorities, even at the cost of conscience; not knowing the facts; not having developed enough the consciousness of the heart, whereby we would have felt the wrongdoing without the witness of documents—therefore, we succumbed under the onrush of the currents of national spirit and feeling, being the latter too impetuously and delusively. You must remember that all members of the Branch were relatives of that stock of Germans living in the frontier territories of Bohemia, being a country peopled for the most part with Czechs, a Slavic nation.

Therefore we must confess to our great shame that all members of the Branch believed till the springtime of 1915, Germany to be on the right side. Thereafter, little by little, the truth was infused individually, till in the summertime of 1916 the Branch, as such, resolved to study even the articles upon the war presented us by the QUARTERLY, and to search the truth. The effect of such a study upon the minds of members was evident. But we experienced the fact that some dormant elements, corresponding with German spirit and German nature and barbarism and German mentality, were aroused and brought into daylight in this or that member. Yet even after the first winter's work (1916-17) of such study, we determined to send to the Convention (of 1917) a message of acknowledgment and an expression of our heartfelt thanks. But because of the entrance of the U. S. A. into the war, it was impossible to forward this letter. A copy of it you will find enclosed.

The consciousness of the several members grew deeper, and so it was possible in the summer of 1919 to sketch a draft of a resolution prepared for the Convention "der Vereinigung deutscher Zweige" at Berlin, in September, 1919. We hoped that it would be passed. Unfortunately the very reading of the proposed resolution was rejected by the assembled members—after voting. The intention we had in mind in putting forth this resolution, was: to acknowledge duly our thanks to our loved American brothers and wiser friends; to restore the confidence and faith in the real leadership of the T. S., and the trust in the ability of the present members

Digitized by Google

leading The Theosophical Society; and thirdly to set us a resolute order for interior and outer work.

We will repeat: We acknowledge the leaders of The Theosophical Society to be the leaders of the World's hope and promise, and we experienced the deepening insight and the corroborative sentiments from acceptance of such right thinking as developed in the QUARTERLY. And therefore we are obliged very, very much, to its Editors and co-operators.

From its lines we gathered also the stirring watchword for our Branch activity in the past two years, likewise valid even for the coming years: "Victory for the Soul of the Nation." We are happy to live in a country which has joined hands with France, to take from her its ideals and manners, and is now an ally of the Entente; an act prepared through old sympathies of the Czech nation with France, since many years ago.

Evidently our Branch was living in a different mental and psychic atmosphere from that of the other German Branches. And so it is only right to confess that we are obliged first to that nation, for having made it easier for us to make the turn, back to the right thinking and feeling of the older and wiser members of The Theosophical Society, as to the real issues underlying this Great War.

It is necessary to tell you that it was Czech politicians who protested in the Austrian Parliament against the treaty of peace concluding the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-71, and that Czech politicians were tantalized in Austrian prisons because they tried to protest against this War and to tell the truth as they were seeing it. This precedent expression of sympathy for France is a good omen and gives evidence enough to the statement that the declaration of alliance of the Czech nation with the Entente has a real, genuine motive.

Believing that this joining of the Czech nation to France would mean a partial victory in the battle for liberation of the Soul of the nation, we forget not, that now remain yet other battles to fight to complete the Victory; these battles being: to overcome the inclination of the Czech nation to stop in war and opposition against Germany and the Germans in its own country,—the latter preaching, openly, disloyalty and opposition, because of false argumentation and wrong conclusions; —the latter based on purely materialistic premises and finding expression in the fear to lose its now established state. Against this false and paralyzing thought we must put forward with living force the real thinking, that to choose a material thing at the cost of ignoring and letting be unanswered a high spiritual vocation, which the Divine Wisdom has imbedded in the nation, would mean to lose the loved thing so longtime longed for. Then we must give impulses, through our own individual battles, above all, to overcome the deep-seated pacifistic and atheistic elements in the national mind. Points of contact for our work are given for the first case in the old dream of the Czech nation for kingship, for the Crown of Wenceslaus; and for the second, in St. Wenceslaus and his holy life devoted to God, himself.

We remember that right, clear-cut thinking is the priceless ammunition we can provide for the White Lodge; but we forget not, that the war, fought out in the breast of every member, with the accumulated moral power, and with a more or less strategical insight, is the essential preparation for partaking, in a real way, in the war in Heaven, even now raging.

With fervent passion, we wish victory for the cause of Christ and pray that the Master may help us sinners, and make us worthier instruments in His hands. We have tried to sketch this, our report, as if we were in the presence of the Master, the Warrior of the warriors and the King of the kings.

Very truly and faithfully yours,

OTHMAR KÖHLER, *Branch Secretary.*

Digitized by Google

NOTICE

Members of the T. S. are reminded that mail intended for the several departments can be most readily and promptly handled if addressed as follows:

Secretary T. S.—Mrs. Ada Gregg, P.O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Treasurer T. S.—Professor H. B. Mitchell, P.O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Subscription Department—THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, P.O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

To this address should be sent all names and remittances for the QUARTERLY; all corrections of address for members or subscribers; all notices of the non-receipt of magazine.

Quarterly Book Department—P.O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

To this address should be sent all orders for books; all inquiries about books; all money in payment for books.

Members are requested to send changes of address to the Secretary T. S., to the Treasurer T. S., and to THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

Digitized by Google

STANDARD BOOKS

Blavatsky, H. P.	Five Years of Theosophy	cloth, $2.50
	Key to Theosophy	cloth, 2.50
	Secret Doctrine, The, Vols. I and II and Index	cloth, 12.50
	Theosophical Glossary	cloth, 3.00
	Voice of the Silence	cloth, .65; leather, 1.00
Cust.	Fragments, Volume I	boards, .50
	Volume II	boards, .50
Hillard, Katherine.	Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine	cloth, 2.00
	Primer of Theosophy, A.	paper, .05
Johnston, Charles.	Bhagavad Gita — Translated, annotated; cloth, 1.00; limp leather, India paper, 1.50	
	From the Upanishads	paper, .50
	Parables of the Kingdom, The	paper, .20
	Patanjali's Yoga Sutras — Translated, annotated; cloth, India paper, 1.25	
	Song of Life, The	paper, .50
Judge, William Q.	Bhagavad Gita — Edited; cloth, .65; leather, 1.00	
	Culture of Concentration	paper, .10
	Letters That Have Helped Me, Volume I	cloth, .50
	Volume II	cloth, .75
	Ocean of Theosophy	cloth, 1.10
Keightley, Archibald.	Spiritual Life, The	paper, .10
	Theosophy as an Influence in Life	paper, .10
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger.	Meditation	paper, .50
	Talks on Religion	cloth, 1.50
	Theosophical Society and Theosophy, The	paper, .20
Sinnett, A. P.	Esoteric Buddhism	cloth, 2.00
	Occult World, The	cloth, 2.00
Walker, E. D.	Reincarnation	cloth, 1.50
Idyll of the White Lotus		cloth, 1.00
Light on the Path		cloth, .65; leather, .35
Through the Gates of Gold		cloth, 1.00

The foregoing prices are now correct but all publishers make their prices to us subject to change without notice.

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,
P. O. Box 64, Station D, New York.

Devotional: Bhagavad Gita; Fragments; From the Upanishads; Letters That Have Helped Me; Light on the Path; The Parables of the Kingdom; The Song of Life; Through the Gates of Gold; Voice of the Silence.
Philosophical: Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine; Five Years of Theosophy; Key to Theosophy; Reincarnation; The Secret Doctrine; Talks on Religion; Theosophical Glossary; Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.
Practical: Culture of Concentration; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditation; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path to tread in this*."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. P. O. Box 96, Station O, New York.

Digitized by Google

VOL. XVIII. No. 2 OCTOBER, 1920 No. 70

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Quarterly

Published by The Theosophical Society at
Brooklyn, New York
305 Washington Street
Price for non-members, $1.00 per annum; single copies 25 cents

CONTENTS OF VOL. XVIII., No. 2

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	97
FRAGMENTS	110
"BY WHOM"	111
ROMANCE	117
HUMAN IMMORTALITY AND PRE-EXISTENCE. II.	126
RELIGIOUS ORDERS	136
SAWS—BENT AND OTHERWISE	148
FRENCH REVOLUTION	152
THE REALM, THE RADIANCE AND THE POWER (Reprint)	163
LETTERS TO STUDENTS	170
SCREEN OF TIME	175
REVIEWS	187
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	190

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of the Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are:- The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Digitized by Google

NOTES AND COMMENTS

OCTOBER, 1920

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

"Signs of the Times"

"THUS finally Science, in the person of its highest representatives, in order to make itself clearer to the profane, adopts the phraseology of such old adepts as Roger Bacon, and returns to the 'protyle.' All this is hopeful and suggestive of the 'signs of the times.' "—H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (II, p. 533, 1888).

"Indeed," the passage just quoted continues, "these 'signs' are many and multiply daily." An effort was made, in the April number of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, to gather some of them together, with special reference to *Five Years of Theosophy*.

We have space for but one more instance in which the science of to-day is catching up with the occult conclusions given out thirty-five or more years ago. In reply to the English F. T. S., we read: "Atlantis was not merely the name of one island but that of a whole continent, many of whose isles and islets have to this day survived. . . . A pedestrian from the north might then have reached—hardly wetting his feet—the Alaskan peninsula, through Manchuria, across the *future* Gulf of Tartary, the Kurile and Aleutian Islands; while another traveller, furnished with a canoe and starting from the south, could have walked over from Siam, crossed the Polynesian Islands, and trudged into any part of the continent of South America."

Two cablegrams of recent date bear directly upon this last statement. The first is dated Honolulu, September 13, 1919, and is as follows: "Search for evidence supporting the theory of a lost Pacific continent is being prosecuted in the Hawaiian Islands, the South Seas and along the west coast of South America. Professor Douglas R. Campbell, of the botany department of Stanford University, thinks that in certain specimens of ferns found on the Island of Hawaii he has established the fact that at some period there was land connection between the Hawaiian group and the islands to the south and west, through the Malay peninsula. Professor T. A. Jaggar, jr., in charge of the Federal

Digitized by Google

observatory at Kilauea, agrees with Professor Campbell's theory, asserting that there are geological indications that the islands of the Pacific were once connected. Seeking data in support of Professor Campbell's theory, Professor W. A. Bryan, of the College of Hawaii, is now touring the west coast of South America and the South Sea Islands."

The second cable message is dated Buenos Aires, December 26: "Evidence of a lost continent in the Pacific Ocean, a 6,000-mile prehistoric 'bridge' of land between South America and Hawaii, is being sought by an American scientist, William Alanson Bryan, professor of zoology and geology in the college of Hawaii, who left Honolulu last June on his remarkable quest. Dr. Bryan, who came to Argentina by way of Mexico and the West Coast of South America, where he studied volcanoes and Andean geology, is about to return to Valparaiso, where he will board a ship for the little island of Juan Fernandez, 400 miles out. The island is inhabited by a small colony of fishermen and their families. 'In the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Science,' said the Professor, 'I was surprised a year ago to discover certain little fresh water molluscs from Juan Fernandez that were extraordinarily similar in their characteristics to certain molluscs in Hawaii. So I determined to visit the island, study those shells and its entire flora and fauna.' If the Juan Fernandez molluscs should prove to be closely allied with those of Hawaii, Dr. Bryan explained in an address here, it would prove that land connection had existed, as the species must have travelled from Juan Fernandez to Hawaii, or vice versa, by the rivers of the prehistoric continent. He hopes by visiting the island to find evidence of the date of submergence of the continent, its geology, configuration, and the direction in which the rivers ran. . . . Professor Bryan considers it not unlikely that the lost Pacific continent preceded that of South America in the dark ages of time."

Let us turn now to another field. A glance through the Index of *The Secret Doctrine* will show how great "a lover of the ancients," including the great men of classical antiquity from Anaxagoras to Zeno, its author was.

We hail it as one of the "signs of the times" that the late Sir William Osler, in his address on *The old Humanities and the new Science* delivered on May 16, 1919, before the British Classical Association at Oxford, has page after page concerning these classical ancients, that might almost have come from H. P. Blavatsky's pen.

The address is full of humour, with a style for the most part delightful; there are certain shortcomings, which we shall refer to later; but for the passages dealing with the great men of two milleniums ago, every student of *The Secret Doctrine* will be sincerely thankful.

Take, for example, this passage (p. 38):

"(Saint Augustine), the moulder of Western Christianity, had not much use for science, and the Greek spirit was stifled in the atmosphere of the Middle Ages. 'Content to be deceived, to live in a twilight of fiction, under clouds of false witnesses, inventing according to conveni-

Digitized by Google

ence, and glad to welcome the forger and the cheat'—such, as Lord Acton somewhere says, were the Middle Ages. Strange, is it not? that one man alone, Roger Bacon, mastered his environment and had a modern outlook. How modern Bacon's outlook was may be judged from the following sentence: 'Experimental science has three great prerogatives over all other sciences—it verifies conclusions by direct experiment; it discovers truths which they could never reach, and it investigates the secrets of nature and opens to us a knowledge of the past and future.'

"The practical point for us here is that in the only school dealing with the philosophy of human thought, the sources of the new science that has made a new world are practically ignored. One gets even an impression of neglect in the schools, or at any rate of scant treatment, of the Ionian philosophers, the very fathers of your fathers. Few 'Greats' men, I fear, could tell why Hippocrates is a living force to-day, or why a modern scientific physician would feel more at home with Erasistratus and Herophilus at Alexandria, or with Galen at Pergamos, than at any period in our story up to, say Harvey. Except as a delineator of character, what does the Oxford scholar know of Theophrastus, the founder of modern botany, and a living force to-day in one of the two departments of biology. . . Beggarly recognition or base indifference is meted out to the men whose minds have fertilized science in every department. The pulse of every student should beat faster as he reads the story of Archimedes, of Hero, of Aristarchus. . . The methods of these men exorcised vagaries and superstitions from the human mind and pointed to a clear knowledge of the laws of nature.

"In biology Aristotle speaks for the first time the language of modern science, and indeed he seems to have been first and foremost a biologist, and his natural history studies influenced profoundly his sociology, and his philosophy in general . . . the founder of modern biology, whose language is our language, whose methods and problems are our own, the man who knew a thousand varied forms of life,—of plant, of bird, of animal,—their outward structure, their metamorphosis, their early development; who studied the problems of heredity, of sex, of nutrition, of growth, of adaptation, and of the struggle for existence. . . . For two thousand years the founder of the science of embryology had neither rival nor worthy follower. . ."

Thus Sir William Osler makes his declaration in 1919. As long ago as 1888, more than thirty years earlier, H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

"This law of vortical movement in primordial matter, is one of the oldest conceptions of Greek philosophy, whose first historical Sages were nearly all Initiates of the Mysteries. The Greeks had it from the Egyptians, and the latter from the Chaldeans, who had been the pupils of Brahmans of the esoteric school. Leucippus, and Democritus of Abdera—the pupil of the Magi—taught that this gyratory movement of the atoms and spheres existed from eternity. Hicetas, Heraclides, Ecphantus, Pythagoras, and all his pupils, taught the rotation of the earth; and Aryabhatta of India, Aristarchus, Seleucus, and Archimedes

Digitized by Google

calculated its revolutions as scientifically as the astronomers do now; while the theory of the Elemental Vortices was known to Anaxagoras, and maintained by him 500 years B. C., or nearly 2,000 before it was taken up by Galileo, Descartes, Swedenborg, and finally, with slight modifications, by Sir W. Thomson . . . The sphericity of the earth was distinctly taught by Aristotle, who appealed for proof to the figure of the earth's shadow on the moon in eclipses . . . (I, p. 117) Following Plato, Aristotle explained that the term *stòikheia* was understood only as meaning the incorporeal principles placed at each of the four great divisions of our Cosmical world to supervise them . . . (I, p. 123) Thus the original Greek conception of Chaos is that of the Secret Wisdom Religion. In Hesiod, therefore, Chaos is infinite, boundless, endless and filled with darkness, which is primordial matter in its *pre-cosmic* state. For in its etymological sense, Chaos is Space, according to Aristotle, and Space is *the* ever Unseen and Unknowable Deity in our philosophy. . . ."

And so one might continue to quote, page after page.

To turn again to Sir William Osler's Address. Closely following what has been quoted, he says (p. 43):

"Unmatched among the ancients or moderns is the vision of Lucretius of continuity in the workings of Nature—not less of *le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis* which so affrighted Pascal, than of 'the long, limitless age of days, the age of all time that has gone by'—

'. . . longa diei
infinita aetas anteacti temporis omnis.'

And it is in a Latin poet that we find up-to-date views of the origin of the world and of the origin of man. The description of the wild discordant storm of atoms (Book V), which led to the birth of the world might be transferred verbatim to the accounts of Poincaré or Arrhenius of the growth of new celestial bodies in the Milky Way. What an insight into primitive man and the beginnings of civilization! He might have been a contemporary and friend, and doubtless was a tutor, of Tylor. Book II, a manual of atomic physics with its marvellous conception of

". . . the flaring atom streams
And torrents of her myriad universe,'

can only be read appreciatively by pupils of Roentgen or of J. J. Thomson. The ring theory of magnetism advanced in Book VI has been reproduced of late by Parsons, whose magnetons rotating as rings at high speed have the form and effect with which this disciple of Democritus clothes his magnetic physics."

Of many passages in *The Secret Doctrine* referring to Lucretius, we need quote but one:

"Modern physics, while borrowing from the ancients their atomic theory, forgot one point, the most important of the doctrine; hence they got only the husks and will never be able to get at the kernel. They left behind, in the adoption of physical atoms, the suggestive fact that from

Digitized by Google

Anaxagoras down to Epicurus, the Roman Lucretius, and finally even to Galileo, all those philosophers believed more or less in *animated* atoms, not in invisible specks of so-called 'brute' matter. Rotatory motion was generated in their views, by larger (read, more divine and pure) atoms forcing downward other atoms; the lighter ones being thrust simultaneously upward. The esoteric meaning of this is the ever cyclic curve downward and upward of differentiated elements through intercyclic phases of existence, until each reaches again its starting point or birthplace. The idea was metaphysical as well as physical; the hidden interpretation embracing 'gods' or souls, in the shape of atoms, as the *causes* of all the *effects* produced on Earth by the *secretions* from the divine bodies. No ancient philosopher, not even the Jewish Kabalists, ever dissociated Spirit from matter or *vice versâ*. Everything originated in the ONE, and proceeding from the One, must finally return to the One." (1888, I. p. 567.)

H. P. Blavatsky, like Osler, recognizes the profound debt of the modern atomic theory to Lucretius and his predecessors, and, at the same time, really gets at the heart of the ancient teaching.

We have room only for one more passage from Osler, which closes his address:

"There is a sentence in the writings of the Father of Medicine [Hippocrates] upon which all commentators have lingered, *'ēn gar parē philanthropiē paresti kai philotekhniē'*—love of humanity associated with the love of his craft!—philanthropia and philotechnia—the joy of working joined in each one to a true love of his brother. Memorable sentence indeed! in which for the first time was coined the magic word 'philanthropy,' and conveying the subtle suggestion that perhaps in this combination the longings of humanity may find their solution, and Wisdom —*Philosophia*—at last be justified of her children."

In the Greek sentence which Osler thus quotes, perhaps without full realization of its source, from the Western Master, the word translated Wisdom is *Sophia*, but clearly used in the sense of Divine Wisdom, *Theosophia*. Taken in this truer sense, all students of Theosophy will agree with Osler, that "here the longings of humanity may find their solution."

We spoke of certain shortcomings, as they seem to us, in Osler's outlook. Briefly they are these: he did not recognize the high value of the spiritual life of the Middle Ages; he did not see the high philosophic worth of the older Eastern religions. But for what he did see, we are deeply grateful.

In other directions also, there is this same turning to the teachings of the "ancients" that H. P. Blavatsky has called "a sign of the times." Some three years ago, a group of professors and teachers of philosophy and psychology, inspired, perhaps, by Bergson's greatest work, *Creative Evolution*, gathered together a group of essays, with the inspiring title, *Creative Intelligence*, under the general editorship of Professor John Dewey. Two of the essays in this book offer passages which well illus-

Digitized by Google

trate our theme. The first is an essay on "Value and Existence in Philosophy, Art, and Religion," by Mr. Horace M. Kallen. The passage follows:

"To Plato man is at once a protean beast, a lion, and an intellect; the last having for its proper task to rule the first and to regulate the second, which is always rebellious and irruptive. According to the Christian tradition man is at once flesh and spirit, eternally in conflict with one another, and the former is to be mortified that the latter may have eternal life. Common sense divides us into head and heart, never quite at peace with one another. There is no need of piling up citations. Add to the inward disharmonies of mind its incompatibilities with the environment, and you perceive at once how completely it is, from moment to moment, a theater and its life a drama of which the interests that compose it are at once protagonists and directors. The catastrophe of this unceasing drama is always that one or more of the players is driven from the stage of conscious existence. It may be that the environment —social conditions, commercial necessity, intellectual urgency, allies of other interests—will drive it off; it may be that its own intrinsic unpleasantness will banish it, will put it out of mind; whatever the cause, it is put out. Putting it out does not, however, end the drama; putting it out serves to complicate the drama. For the 'new psychology' shows that whenever an interest or a desire or impulsion is put out of the mind, it is really, if not extirpated, put into the mind; it is driven from the conscious level of existence to the unconscious. It retains its force and direction, only its work now lies underground. Its life henceforward consists partly in a direct oppugnance to the inhibitions that keep it down, partly in burrowing beneath and around them and seeking out unwonted channels of escape. Since life is long, repressions accumulate, the mass of existence of feeling and desire tends to become composed entirely of these repressions, layer upon layer, with every interest in the aggregate striving to attain place in the daylight of consciousness.

"Now, empirically and metaphysically, no one interest is more excellent than another. Repressed or patent, each is, whether in a completely favorable environment or in a completely indifferent universe, or before the bar of an absolute justice, or under the domination of an absolute and universal good, entitled to its free fulfilment and perfect maintenance. Each is a form of the good; the essential content of each is good. That they are not fulfilled, but repressed, is a fact to be recorded, not an appearance to be explained away. And it may turn out that the existence of the fact may explain the effort to explain it away. For where interests are in conflict with each other or with reality, and where the loser is not extirpated, its revenge may be just this self-fulfilment in unreality, in idea, which philosophies of absolute values offer it. Dreams, some of the arts, religion and philosophy may indeed be considered as such fulfilments, worlds of luxuriant self-realization of all that part of our nature which the harsh conjunctions with the environment overthrow and suppress.

Digitized by Google

Sometimes abortive self-expressions of frustrated desires, sometimes ideal compensations for the shortcomings of existence, they are always equally ideal reconstructions of the surrounding evil of the world into forms of the good. And because they are compensations in idea, they are substituted for existence, appraised as 'true,' and 'good,' and 'beautiful,' and 'real,' while the experiences which have suppressed the desires they realize are condemned as illusory and unreal. In them humanity has its freest play and amplest expression."

There are several notable points here. To take the most obvious: We have here an exact description of the way in which many students of Theosophy believe the states of consciousness after death to be generated, and particularly the state called Devachan, which is precisely a world "of luxuriant self-realization of all that part of our nature which the harsh conjunctions with the environment overthrow and suppress," and "an ideal compensation for the shortcomings of existence."

Indeed we may go farther, and say that one side at least of the operation of Karma follows exactly the process described, and is so expounded again and again in the psychological teachings of Buddhism.

We saw that Mr. Kallen began by citing Plato. He adds an exceedingly interesting footnote:

"Compare Plato, *Republic,* IX, 571, 572, for an explicit anticipation of Freud." The passage is in substance as follows:

"Certain of the unnecessary pleasures and appetites I conceive to be unlawful; every one appears to have them, but in some persons they are controlled by the laws and by reason, and the better desires prevail over them—either they are wholly banished or they become few and weak; while in the case of others they are stronger, and there are more of them. I mean those appetites which are awake when the reasoning and human and ruling power is asleep; then the wild beast within us, gorged with meat and drink, goes forth to satisfy his desires; and there is no conceivable folly or crime which at such a time, when he has parted company with all shame and sense, a man may not be ready to commit.

"But when a man's pulse is healthy and temperate, and when before going to sleep he has awakened his rational powers, and fed them on noble thoughts and enquiries, collecting himself in meditation, leaving the higher principle in the solitude of pure abstraction, free to contemplate and aspire to the knowledge of the unknown, whether in past, present or future; when again he has allayed the passionate element, if he has a quarrel against any one—when, after pacifying the two irrational principles, he rouses up the third, which is reason, before he takes his rest, then, as you know, he attains truth most nearly, and is least likely to be the sport of fantastic and lawless visions. The point which I desire to note is that in all of us, even in good men, there is a lawless wild-beast nature, which peers out in sleep."

Mr. Kallen with great wisdom adds the comment: "This 'new psychology' is not so very new!"

A student of Theosophy would be inclined to say that, in this

Digitized by Google

passage of Plato, there is something more and deeper than an anticipation of Freud: namely a clear indication of the Eastern teaching of the spiritual state of Meditation, and of its analogue in the condition beyond dreams.

Take, in illustration, this passage from *Prashna Upanishad:*

"So this bright one in dream enjoys greatness. The seen, as seen he beholds again. What was heard, as heard he hears again. And what was enjoyed by the other powers, he enjoys again by the other powers. . . . And when he is wrapt by the radiance, the bright one no longer sees dreams. Then within him that bliss arises. And, as the birds come to the tree to rest, so all this comes to rest in the higher Self."

Here is Plato's idea expressed as profoundly, or even more profoundly, many centuries earlier.

Or one might quote from the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad:

"They also say that dream is a province of waking. For whatever he sees while awake, the same he sees in dream. . . Then as a falcon or an eagle, flying to and fro in the open sky and growing weary, folds his wings and sinks to rest, so of a truth the Spirit of man hastens to that world where, finding rest, he desires no desire and dreams no dream. . ."

It would be a happy thing if modern students of psychology, who thus recognize that the new psychology "is not so very new," would take one step further and recognize that the great Eastern religions are based on the method of experience and grave experiment which the modern schools accept; that they long ago carried this method much farther, into the immortal region of our nature; and that their teaching of immortality is founded on what they learned there.

That there is a real tendency in this direction, is suggested by another essay in the same book: "The Moral Life and the Construction of Values and Standards," by James Hayden Tufts.

There is much of high value on the development of the self, which we should like to quote if space permitted; for example, such a sentence as this: "The self by reflecting and enlarging its scope is similarly enlarged. It is the *resulting* self which is the final valuer. . . The self of the full moral consciousness, however,—the only one which can claim acceptance or authority—is born only in the process of considering real conditions, of weighing and choosing between alternatives of action in a real world of nature and persons. . ."

One might compare this with the passage in *Katha Upanishad:*

"The better and the dearer approach a man; going round them, the sage discerns between them. The sage chooses the better rather than the dearer; the fool chooses the dearer, through lust of possession. . ."

But we must content ourselves with citing only the closing paragraphs of this valuable essay:

"What we have aimed to present as a moral method is essentially this: to take into our reckoning all the factors of the situation, to take into account the other persons involved, to put ourselves into their places

Digitized by Google

by sympathy as well as conceptually, to face collisions and difficulties not merely in terms of fixed concepts of what is good and fair, and what the right of each party concerned may be, but with the conviction that we need new definitions of the ideal life, and of the social order, and thus reciprocally of personality. Thus harmonized, free, and responsible, life may well find new meaning also in the older intrinsic goods of friendship, aesthetic appreciation and true belief. And it is not likely to omit the satisfaction in actively constructing new ideals and working for their fulfilment.

"Frankly, if we do not accept this method what remains? Can any one by pure reason discover a single forward step in the treatment of the social situation or a single new value in the moral ideal? Can any analysis of the pure concept of right and good teach us anything? In the last analysis the moral judgment is not analytic but synthetic. The moral life is not natural but spiritual. And spirit is creative."

The last sentences go farther than anything else in the book to justify its high title: *Creative Intelligence*. They express the spirit of Theosophy which, even for Masters, is an experimental science. And perhaps, using some such bridge as this, students of the "new" psychology and students of Theosophy may meet and work together at the common task.

This spirit of conciliation and reconciliation is finely manifested in a short article on "Science and Religion," by Mr. Garrett P. Serviss, a well known writer on astronomy; one of a series of articles that have appeared in the evening newspapers of our largest cities, and therefore rightly to be numbered among the "Signs of the Times." The central passages of the article follow:

"Science is not opposed to religion. But it is opposed to theology when theology demands belief in things which all of man's means of obtaining real, verifiable knowledge tell him are not so.

"Theology is not religion. It is simply theory about religion. The Bible is not religion; it is history compiled with theological bias of a remarkable people, and mingled with philosophical speculation, mythology, romance and poetry. Many theological scholars admit the truth of these statements, and some do not hesitate themselves to republish them.

"Religion is recognition of the rule of higher power and higher intelligence than man's. If science should ever become so foolish as to oppose itself to that, it would deservedly and utterly fail. But out of, or upon, the fundamental idea of religion theological speculation has built many systems and dogmas which have had their ups and downs, their advances and retreats, their conquests and overthrows, throughout the course of human history.

"All have had their 'revelations,' all have affirmed that they were divinely and specially inspired, and every one of them has proclaimed itself to be the sole possessor and upholder of truth! But the truth that science seeks is universal, not exclusive.

"If you aver that man's means of gaining knowledge mislead him

Digitized by Google

and that his knowledge is false, how do you go to work to establish your assertion? Ignoring the only method of demonstration that man possesses, the very method upon which you yourself are entirely dependent for all the acts and decisions of your life, you merely say: 'Believe this through faith only.'

"That does not appear to me to be the kind of faith that Christ had in mind when He declared in effect that any man who could attain the faith that He spoke of, and exercise it in perfection, would be sovereign over nature. (See Mark 11, 23, and collate it with Matthew 8, 26, and John 14, 12.) But it does appear to me that Christ's thought runs parallel with the aspiration of science, which, whether avowed or not, is to approach as near as may be the Supreme Intelligence. Can you discern any opposition between what Christ said and the teachings of science that man's course has always been upward?

"Suppose that He were living on earth today among the people of the twentieth century, as He lived among the people of Palestine in the days of the first Cæsars—what course can you suppose that He would pursue with regard to the results of modern scientific progress? Would He command His followers to go back to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, which theology covering itself with His name, once maintained for inspired truth?

"Would He condemn the telephone, the automobile, the printing press, the airplane, wireless telegraphy, life-saving surgery, chemical progress, as the evil works of Satan? Surely no! Yet those things are the children of science only, and are based entirely upon scientific discoveries, nearly all of which have been opposed, maligned, denounced or interdicted by that same theology, until they brushed it out of their way as the rising sun dissolves the lowering mists of an autumn morning.

"Remembering the profound wisdom, the deep insight into man and nature, of the sayings of Christ fragmentarily reported in the New Testament, can you possibly imagine Him today rejecting the geological evidence concerning the vast age of the earth and of life upon the earth? Would He say: 'If ye would enter into Heaven, avoid the natural history museum?'

"For my part I believe that Christ on earth today would be the supreme leader of science. There is a significance never yet fully fathomed in the fact that the great advances of science have all been made in countries where Christian civilization prevails, or where its influence has been predominant, although Christian theology, instead of taking the lead in those advances, has continually opposed them and only yielded with a bad grace when further opposition became plain folly. May that not mean that the true spirit of Christ's teaching is accordant with the spirit of science, whose constant aim is the truth and only the truth?"

Students of Theosophy would be inclined to make this statement more general. Holding that to be a Master is thereby to be immortal

Digitized by Google

as to the real individuality, they think of the Western Master as existing today, and destined to exist, according to his own words, "even unto the end of the world." And not only do they hold that that Master and all Masters are the real leaders in science, as in all truth, but they hold that the genuine truths of science have been known to Masters for untold ages; and that our "modern" discoveries and achievements, like those enumerated in this article, are simply the most external form of powers habitually used by Masters, together with much greater powers, as incidents in their daily life.

Significant as a "Sign of the Times" is an article by Mr. John Burroughs, in *The North American Review* for September, with the title: "A Sheaf of Nature Notes"; especially significant, because it marks the general reaction against the materialism of nineteenth century science, and, perhaps, because its author has often appeared somewhat biassed towards materialism.

But in the evening of the day comes quietude, and, with quietude, wisdom; and some of the passages to be quoted closely echo *The Secret Doctrine* in its criticism of materialistic views.

Thus H. P. Blavatsky wrote, some thirty-two years ago: "The day *may* come, then, when 'Natural Selection,' as taught by Mr. Darwin and Mr. Herbert Spencer, will form only *a part,* in its ultimate modification, of our Eastern doctrine of Evolution. . ." (I, p. 600.)

And John Burroughs, unconsciously fulfilling that prophecy, writes today:

"That Darwin was a great natural philosopher and a good and wise man admits of no question, but to us, at this distance, it seems strange enough that he should have thought that he had hit upon the key to the origin of species in the slow and insensible changes which he fancied species underwent during the course of geologic ages, and should thus have used that phrase as the title of his book. Had he called his work the Variability of Species, or the Modification of Species, it would not have been such a misnomer. Sudden mutations give us new varieties, but not new species. In fact, of the origin of species we know absolutely nothing, no more than we do about the origin of life itself.

"Of the development of species we know some of the factors that play a part, as the influence of environment, the struggle for existence, and the competitions of life. But do we not have to assume an inherent tendency to development, an original impulse as the key to evolution? Accidental conditions and circumstances modify, but do not originate species. The fortuitous plays a part in retarding or hastening a species, and in its extinction, but not in its origin. The record of the rocks reveals to us the relation of species, and their succession in geologic time, but gives no hint of their origin.

"Agassiz believed that every species of animal and plant was the result of a direct and separate act of the Creator. But the rationalist sees the creative energy imminent in matter. Does not one have to

Digitized by Google

believe in something like this to account for the world as we see it? And to account for us also?—a universal mind or intelligence

> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

"Agassiz was too direct and literal; he referred to the Infinite Mystery in terms of our own wills and acts. When we think of a Creator, and of a thing created as two, we are in trouble at once. They are one, as fire and light are one, as soul and body are one. Darwin said he could not look upon the world as the result of chance, and yet his theory of the origin of species ushers us into a chance world. But when he said, speaking of the infinite variety of living forms about us, that they 'have all been produced by laws acting around us,' he spoke as a great philosopher. But these laws are not fortuitous, or the result of the blind groping of irrational forces."

There follows a very intuitive passage on the world as a living organism, which we would willingly quote if space allowed. Then John Burroughs comes back to Darwin, in passages which are admirably at home in THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY:

"That Darwinism was indirectly one of the causes of the world war seems to me quite obvious. Unwittingly the great and gentle naturalist has more to answer for than he ever dreamed of. His biological doctrine of the struggle for existence, natural selection, and the survival of the fittest, fairly intoxicated the Germans from the first. These theories fell in well with their militarism and their natural cruelty and greediness. Their philosophers took them up eagerly. Weissmann fairly made a god of natural selection, as did other German thinkers. And when they were ready for war, the Germans at once applied the law of the jungle to human affairs. The great law of evolution, the triumph of the strong, the supremacy of the fit, became the foundation of their political and national ideals. They looked for no higher proof of the divinity of this law as applied to races and nations, than the fact that the organic world had reached its present stage of development through the operation of this law. Darwin had given currency to these ideals. He had denied that there was any inherent tendency to development, that we lived in a world of chance, and that power only comes to him who exerts power—half truths, all of them.

"The Germans as a people have never been born again into the light of our higher civilization. They are morally blind and politically treacherous. Their biological condition is that of the lower orders, and the Darwinian law of progress came to them as an inspiration. Darwin's mind, in its absence of the higher vision, was a German mind. In his plodding patience, his devotion to details, and in many other ways, his mind was German. But in his candor, his truthfulness, his humility, his simplicity, he was anything but German. Undoubtedly his teachings

Digitized by Google

bore fruit of a political and semi-political character in the Teutonic mind. The Teutons incorporated the law of the jungle in their ethical code. Had not they the same right to expansion and to the usurpation of the territory and to the treasures of their neighbors that every weed in the fields and even the vermin of the soil and the air have? If they had the sanction of natural law, that was enough; they were quite oblivious to the fact that with man's moral nature had come in a new biological law which Darwin was not called upon to reckon with, but which has tremendous authority and survival value—the law of right, justice, mercy, honor, love.

"We do not look for the Golden Rule among swine and cattle, or among wolves and sharks; we look for it among men; we look for honor, for heroism, for self-sacrifice, among men. None of these things are involved in the Darwinian hypothesis. There is no such thing as right or wrong in the orders below man. These are purely human distinctions. It is not wrong for the wolf to eat the lamb, nor the lamb to eat the grass, but an aggressive war is wrong to the depths of the farthest star. Germany's assault upon the peace and prosperity of the world was a crime against the very heavens.

"Darwin occupied himself only with the natural evolution of organic forms, and not with the evolution of human communities. He treated man as an animal, and fitted him into the zoological scheme. He removed him from the realm of the miraculous into the plane of the natural. For all purposes of biological discussion, man is an animal; but that is not saying he is only an animal, and still under the law of animal evolution. The European man is supposed to have passed the stage of savagery, in which the only rule of right is the rule of might. To have made Darwinism an excuse for a war of aggression, is to have debased a sound natural philosophy to a selfish and ignoble end.

"Germany lifted the law to the human realm and staked her all upon it, and failed. The moral sense of the world—the sense of justice, of fair play, was against her, and inevitably she went down. Her leaders were morally blind. When the rest of the world talked of moral standards, the German leaders said, 'We think you are fools.' But these standards brought England into the war—the sacredness of treaties. It brought the United States in. We saw a common enemy in Germany, an enemy of mankind. We sent millions of our men to France for an ideal—for justice and fair play. To see our standards of right and justice ignored and trampled upon in this way, was intolerable. The thought of the world being swayed by Prussianism was unbearable. I said to myself from the first, 'The Allies have got to win—there is no alternative.' And what astonishes me is that certain prominent Englishmen, such as Lord Morley, John Burns, and others, did not see it. Would they have sat still and watched Germany destroy France and plant herself upon the Channel and make ready to destroy England? The very framework of our moral civilization would have been destroyed. Darwin little dreamed to what his natural selection theory was to lead."

Digitized by Google

FRAGMENTS

COOL fingers stroke the feverish brow of day. Evening is here with her purple shadows and her fragrant breath. A holy time, when the earth is fading, even to physical eyes, and the heavens growing nearer with the stars. I watched her climb up the hill-side from the valley, where the mists were lying—floating like thin veils behind her. She has a gentle, silent step, yet steady, as one who knows her way,—as well she must, having taken this path how many ages! As she approaches, our light dims, and the snowy peaks above us grow more rose. When she has passed, they will turn violet, and presently take on the likeness of the mists below,—faint, shadowy forms against her purple sky.

Ah! it was good to be here again after long absence: for the day had been very long, and its labours arduous. After she had passed behind the peaks, the bell rang calling us to prayer; and, as often before, I wondered whether the brother's hand upon the bell within the Temple, or some bell she touched behind the stars, drew from the heart such sweetness of response. "She is mysterious, the evening," said one of us. Another said, "Yes, for the world has never seen her eyes."

There was a low laugh; one high in rank said: "She has the mystery of her mother, Nature, God's book of revelation, the mirror of Himself. Yet to behold and read, there must be the eyes to see, and so the bridge, which makes the Trinity. He who would see the eyes of evening must have eyes like hers, lit by the stars, but shadowed to everything save heaven."

CAVÉ.

Journey towards God though you be lamed or crippled in soul; to wait for healing is to lose time.—ABU ABD ALLAH.

Digitized by Google

"BY WHOM?"

KENA UPANISHAD

TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT WITH AN INTERPRETATION

I

By whom impelled flies the forward-impelled Mind? By whom compelled does the First Life go forth? By whom impelled is this Voice that they speak? Who, in sooth, is the Bright One who compels sight and hearing?

That which they call the Hearing of hearing, the Mind of mind, the Voice of voice, that is the Life of life, the Sight of sight. Setting this free, the Wise, going forth from this world, become immortal.

Sight goes not thither, nor does voice go thither, nor mind. We have not seen, nor do we know, how one may transmit the understanding of this; for this is other than the known, other than the unknown also.

Thus have we heard from those who were before us, who have declared this unto us.

That which by voice is not spoken, that through whose power voice is spoken; that, verily, know thou as the Spirit, the Eternal, not this which here they honour and serve.

That which does not think through the power of the mind; that by which, they have declared, the mind is thought; that, verily, know thou as the Spirit, the Eternal, not this which here they honour and serve.

That which does not see through the power of sight; that by which he perceives sights; that, verily, know thou as the Spirit, the Eternal, not this which here they honour and serve.

That which does not hear through the power of hearing; that through whose power hearing is heard here; that, verily, know thou as the Spirit, the Eternal, not this which here they honour and serve.

That which does not live through the power of the life-breath; that through whose power the life-breath lives; that, verily, know thou as the Spirit, the Eternal, not this which here they honour and serve.

THERE appear to be two fundamental thoughts in this passage from the beginning of the Upanishad "By Whom?"

The first thought is the character of the Spiritual Man, whom the Upanishads elsewhere call "the Man within, in the Heart"; that is, in the inner, spiritual nature.

The second thought is the immediate relation, the entire dependence of the Spiritual Man on the universal Divine Being, here called Brahma, "the Spirit, the Eternal, the Great Breath." Not only is the Spiritual Man dependent upon the Divine Being, but each and every power of the Spiritual Man depends upon, and draws its being from, the corresponding

Digitized by Google

power of the Divine Being. This is the meaning of Paul's words: "in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

While these two thoughts are fundamentally one, being two sides of the same reality, it may be simpler to consider them separately.

To begin with the second verse: "That which they call the Hearing of hearing, the Mind of mind, the Voice of voice, that is the Life of life, the Sight of sight. Setting this free, the Wise, going forth from this world, become immortal."

Here, it is a question of the Sight, Hearing, Life-breath, Voice, Mind of the Spiritual Man, "the Man within, in the Heart," on the one hand, and the sight, hearing, life-breath, voice, mind of the outer personality, on the other. The Wise, the disciples, who set free the Spiritual Man, drawing him steadily forth "like the pith from a reed," from the meshes of the personal man, when they go forth from this world, become immortal.

The same thing is beautifully expressed in Katha Upanishad:

"When this lord of the body, standing within the body, departs; when he goes forth free from the body, what is left?"

The phrase, "the Sight of sight, the Hearing of hearing," recalls a kindred passage in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad:

"The Spirit sees not; yet seeing not, he sees. For the energy that dwelt in sight cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is no other besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to see.

"The Spirit smells not; yet smelling not, he smells. For the energy that dwelt in the power of smell cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is nothing else besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to smell.

"The Spirit tastes not; yet tasting not, he tastes. For the energy that dwelt in taste cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is nothing else besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to taste.

"The Spirit speaks not; yet speaking not, he speaks. For the energy that dwelt in speech cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is nothing else, besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to speak to.

"The Spirit hears not; yet hearing not, he hears. For the energy that dwelt in hearing cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is nothing else besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to hear.

"The Spirit thinks not; yet thinking not, he thinks. For the energy that dwelt in thinking cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is nothing else besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to think of.

"The Spirit touches not; yet touching not, he touches. For the energy that dwelt in touch cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is nothing else besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to touch.

"The Spirit knows not; yet knowing not, he knows. For the energy

Digitized by Google

that dwelt in knowing cannot cease, because it is everlasting. But there is nothing else besides the Spirit, or separate from him, for him to know."

Here again, we are concerned with the two sides of the same reality: on the one hand, the Spiritual Man, whose powers are formed of the essence, the energy, within the external powers; and, on the other hand, the unified Eternal Spirit, of which it cannot be said that it "sees, hears, knows," since there is no other being, separate from it, for it to see, hear, know. Nevertheless, within that Eternal Spirit dwell the essences, the energies, of all the powers; and from these centres of power, of spiritual energy, in the Eternal Spirit, are directly derived the different powers of the Spiritual Man.

Exactly the same thought appears to underlie the four unnumbered rules at the beginning of *Light on the Path*.

One may, perhaps, be permitted to add, within parentheses, a few words which will bring this out; premising, at the same time, that the full meaning goes much deeper, as is shown by the Author's Comments on these unnumbered rules.

If, then, it be permitted to add certain words, these rules would read thus:

"Before the (inner) eyes can see the (outer eyes) must be incapable of tears. Before the (inner) ear can hear (the outer ear) must have lost its sensitiveness. Before the (inner) voice can speak in the presence of the Masters (the outer voice) must have lost the power to wound. Before the soul (the Spiritual Man) can stand in the presence of the Masters its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart (through the purification of the whole personal nature)."

These parallels would seem to make sufficiently clear the thought of the Spiritual Man, the "lord of the body, standing within the body."

Yet the more vital side of the matter still remains to be emphasized: namely, that the Spiritual Man is not for a moment self-subsistent or self-dependent, but, moment by moment, draws his life-breath and the life of every one of his powers directly from the Eternal, the Spirit, the Great Breath.

And the whole life and development of the Spiritual Man depends on the practical realization of this moment to moment dependence on the Great Spirit; therefore the Upanishads are full of the Eternal.

With the sense of the overshadowing, over-ruling Eternal as guide, we may now take up the separate verses of the Upanishad "By Whom?" in the attempt to make their meaning clearer.

To the question: "By whom impelled flies the forward-impelled Mind?" the answer is: The Mind is impelled forward, impelled into objective life, by the Eternal; by that power, that ray of the Eternal, which may be called the Mind of the Eternal, the Mind of God; not in the general sense of the whole Logos, but in the special sense of that ray or

Digitized by Google

principle of the Logos, which has the nature of Mind, and of which the human mind, and the mind in other living beings, is the ray, the manifestation.

In the same way, the answer to the second question: "By whom compelled does the First Life go forth?" is, that the compelling power which sends the first life, the ruling vital breath, into manifestation, is the Life-principle in the Eternal, the principle corresponding to the vital principle in human and other life; or rather, the principle which is the source and fountain of that life, and to which that life corresponds.

Similarly, the answer to the next question: "By whom impelled is this Voice that they speak?" is that this Voice, which means not only the actual power of speech, but the energizing, creative force which lies within and behind speech, and to which speech owes whatever it possesses of compelling force, is the ray, the representative of a like primal power or ray in the Eternal: that special power which has given the name Logos, "the Word," to the whole Being of the manifested Eternal.

The question: "Who, in sooth, compels sight and hearing?" may be answered in the same way. There is the primal power, the source and fountain head of these two forms of perception, in the manifested Eternal. These rays come down and manifest themselves in us, and in other living things, as the sight and hearing that we are familiar with, the ordinary perceptive powers which make use of the eyes and ears as their instruments.

We have, therefore, three groups or levels of these powers: first, their primal essence and source in the manifested Eternal; second, their manifestation in the Spiritual Man, the immortal, indicated in the second verse of the Upanishad; and, third, their everyday manifestation in the outer man. And one may conceive direct lines of connection, originating in each power of the Eternal; passing through the corresponding power of the Spiritual Man and continued to the outer power of the personal man, the eye, the ear, and so on.

Further, it would be wise to think of the Spiritual Man in two aspects, or, one might express it, at two stages. The first is the primal, ideal stage, which one might liken to an outline drawing of the future Spiritual Man. The second is the Spiritual Man, rendered fully conscious and individual by the transfer to him of the centred consciousness developed in the outer personality.

This transfer of the centred consciousness to the Spiritual Man is indicated in the first section of the second part of Katha Upanishad:

"The Self-Being pierced the openings outwards; hence one looks outward, not within himself. A wise man looked towards the Self with reverted sight, seeking deathlessness."

In this "reversion," this transfer of consciousness to the Spiritual Man, there are two principal elements: detachment from the outer, so constantly urged in the *Bhagavad Gita*, and recollection or one-pointed concentration, of which Patanjali has so much to say.

Digitized by Google

This phrase from Katha Upanishad may very well be taken as the answer to the question: "By whom impelled flies the forward-impelled Mind? . . . Who, in sooth, compels sight and hearing?" The answer is: The Self-Being, the manifested Logos.

We come now to the third verse: "Sight goes not thither, nor does voice go thither, nor mind. . . ."

It is a question of making known, so far as that can be known, the nature and being of the Eternal, the Spirit, the Great Breath. That Spirit cannot be seen by the eyes; it is not externally visible as are natural objects. Nor can it be described in words, nor thought of by the external mind, the mental machine; because the mind-machine and the words it uses have both been developed to meet and describe external conditions of manifested things. Therefore they cannot be adequately used to describe or discern the Unmanifest.

The Spirit, the Eternal, is other than the known: other than what is perceived and known by the external senses and the mind-machine. But, since this Spirit is, as we have seen, the source and fountain head of each of these powers, and of the mind also, the Spirit cannot be regarded as alien and infinitely remote. It is, therefore, different from the unknown also.

Concerning the transmission of the knowledge of this, we should always keep in mind the fundamental fact that all Consciousness is ultimately one. There is no absolute chasm, no complete solution of continuity, between my personal consciousness at this moment, and the infinite Consciousness of the Eternal. We are not isolated lives, we are not islands of consciousness; or we are islands only in the sense that all islands are connected together, beneath the ocean.

If it were not for this connection, existing at this moment, existing everlastingly, the matter of our salvation, our liberation, would be hopeless. The chasm could never be bridged.

But the link is there, the connection is there, the bridge is there; it is only a question of our passing over the bridge; and detachment and recollection, which take advantage of the divine forces stretched out toward us, will carry us across.

The knowledge of the Eternal, therefore, could never be transmitted from one isolated soul to another. But, since the Eternal is in both, no such transmission is needed. What is needed is the direction of the attention to what is already there: the divine light within the heart. And one may say that the whole of the Upanishads exist, simply to direct our attention to that "inward light."

The remaining sentences of the passage translated are intended to awaken the intuition of that inward light, to direct our attention to it, to make us more vividly aware of its presence and nature.

The inward light, the divine power within, is "that through whose power voice is spoken." For speech is an expression, a using, of both understanding and will; and understanding and will are manifestations

Digitized by Google

of the inward divine life. And it should be kept in mind, as pointed out before, that "voice" means, not so much uttered speech, as the divine and magical force within speech and manifested by speech; the creative power represented by the pentecostal tongues of flame.

That divine, creative power, therefore, the power which lies behind uttered speech, is to be known as the Spirit; not "this which here they honour and serve."

This last phrase is interpreted by the traditional commentaries as indicating the popular divinities, Agni, Vayu, Indra, and the rest; personified rays of the infinite Spirit, the Great Breath.

But we may take the matter more intimately: "this which here they honour and serve" fairly represents the personal self, whom most of us do so inveterately honour and serve.

It is a question, therefore, of detachment; a question of changing self-love into love of the Divine; of transferring the consciousness from the outer man to the Spiritual Man.

But here it is well to keep in mind what was said at the outset: the vital fact about the Spiritual Man is, that he lives and breathes through the life of the Eternal in him. Not for an instant may he be thought of as separate and independent; his very being depends, from instant to instant, upon the Eternal, and upon ceaseless obedience to the laws of the Eternal. This immediate dependence of the Spiritual Man on the Eternal is the foremost fact of his being.

For the disciple, this will mean that his inner life is sustained from moment to moment by the life of his Master, who embodies and focusses the Eternal for him; the life-breath of the disciple will be unceasing obedience to the will of the Eternal, expressed through the will of his Master.

This will not mean passivity. Far from it, since the will of the Eternal is a divine, creative will. Therefore obedience to the divine will, the Master's will, and response to that will, means the gradual exercise of divine, creative power, but always in entire compliance with the plan of the Master, the Eternal.

The Upanishad goes on to fix our attention upon the inner Spirit within each of our powers: sight, hearing, life-breath, mind. The purpose is recollection, inwardness, to be brought about through detachment and concentration; thus gradually transferring to the Spiritual Man the life-forces previously squandered upon the outer man, and at the same time constantly keeping alive the intuition and recognition of the Eternal, the Spirit, the Great Breath, as the source and inspiration and home of the Spiritual Man.

C. J.

(*To be continued.*)

Digitized by Google

ROMANCE

WHAT is Romance? Not, what is *a* romance, but what is Romance itself?

A glance at the dictionary definitions will show that while none of them does better than to summon before the reader his own instinctive intimation of what Romance is, nevertheless there are indications that historically both the word Romance and the idea behind it, have a very rich and suggestive meaning. Webster claims that Romance is "a species of fictitious writing," and again, "any fictitious and wonderful tale; a sort of novel, especially one which treats of surprising adventures usually befalling a hero or a heroine; a tale of extravagant adventures of love and the like." Under "Romantic," this dictionary approaches somewhat closer to the heart of the subject, when it says, "Pertaining or appropriate to the style of the Christian and popular literature of the Middle Ages, as opposed to the classical antique; hence, fictitious, extravagant, fanciful," etc. Stormonth improves this by adding, "and with which the sublime and beautiful are more or less blended;" while the *Century* contributes, "an ideal state of things; partaking of the heroic, the marvellous, the supernatural, or the imaginative."

Adding together what is best in these definitions, the result, though suggestive, says no more than that Romance is composed of certain general elements. At the same time, such terms as "extravagant" and "fanciful" are used with "supernatural" and "sublime" in a way that is confusing and misleading. Can a thing be at once extravagant and truly supernatural, truly sublime? And why is "the Christian and popular literature of the Middle Ages" "opposed to the classical antique?" Is Romance a thing confined to the Christian age, and if so, what of all the loves and fights and adventures of Homer's day and before. What did Macaulay mean when he wrote in his essay on History: "History commenced among the modern nations of Europe, as it had commenced among the Greeks, in romance?"

Rather than undertake to answer these questions methodically, it would seem better to attempt some exposition of what we mean by Romance, developing the theme from an independent basis; and then to apply the result to such questions as may remain unanswered.

Romance is a light of eternity irradiating the unexplained events familiar to our everyday experience and consciousness. It is the antidote to scientific or prosaic realism. It does not lead to idealism, the opposite to realism; it reveals truth. It sees things as they are *sub specie eternitatis*, bathed in the rosy glow of divine illumination. It brings to our eyes, holden by false material lights and blinded by passion and desire, the vision of nature and of life more nearly as they are. Romance is the sparkling of the diamond—truth.

Digitized by Google

Therefore Romance itself exists. It is in, and of, reality; inherent in life as a radiance, as the essential poetry and joy and mystery of a divinely ordered activity. Romance is nature's charm; "that light whose *smile* kindles the universe." When Romance itself is seen or felt or apprehended in any way, then we have come upon eternal life. For true life is a romance; and so life, seen truly, is romantic. Romance, therefore, is at once a way of understanding the interplay of the love and mystery and beauty and joy of things, and a new quality that springs from their union and harmony. Until life is seen as radiant immortality, in terms of love and mystery and beauty and joy, it is not really seen at all. "Remember, moreover, that only to those who are deaf is life a cry; it is a song: and if this be true of life in general, it is also true of life in particular, of your life and of theirs." Life *seen* in such terms is Romance; to *see* the Song of Life is Romance.

The so-called Romantic schools of art—poets, painters, sculptors, musicians—felt or saw or heard, something of real life, of immortal life.

"For sure so fair a place was never seen,
Of all that ever charmed romantic eye."

The Romancer sees at once what *is*, and what may be, what should be. He has the "romantic eye"—a thing in measure given, it would seem, to many; though in its higher and more penetrating sense, given only to him who, as having the ear to hear, has also the eye to see. Youth, more than any other age, and most of the great artists, possess this eye: youth, because it is innocent, and because "the pure in heart see God;" artists, because they have imaginations which are purified at least in part.

Wordsworth, a true poet, has spoken for the capacity of youth for romance, at the same time revealing a high order of the romance-vision of the artist.

"There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
. . . . . .
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted forever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we were toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by . . ."

Digitized by Google

It is, perhaps, because there is "a Presence which is not to be put by," a centre of immortal life, of reality, in most of us—because most men and women have experienced moments when the veils of their own self-deception melted away before the radiance of some inner divine fire of love or religion or passionate endeavour, that so many crave Romance. People speak wistfully of such moments; they cherish and reverence the ideals, the "dreams," of youth; so few, alas, dare to hope for their return. But Romance has been, it *is*, known; the imagination has been stirred; and imagination, the pioneer of the will, creates a fairy-land of mystery, of beauty, of happiness, of things as they ought to be, "moving about in worlds not realized."

Spenser, perhaps the greatest Romance poet, says quite frankly that "Glory" is the "Faerie Queene" whom Arthure "went to seeke her forth in Faerie Land;" and Malory takes us into another, similar world of his own creation, differing from others only in the individual contribution of his particular mind. "We must have symbols," says Emerson. "The child asks you for a story, and is thankful for the poorest. It is not poor to him, but radiant with meaning. The man asks for a novel—that is, asks leave for a few hours to be a poet, and to paint things as they ought to be. The youth asks for a poem. The very dunces wish to go to the theater. What private heavens can we not open, by yielding to all the suggestions of rich music!"

These "private heavens," our individual romances, are very much nearer to real heaven than we believe. They are the moulds into which heaven pours itself. The lover who dreams of his beloved; the warrior who pictures a happy hunting ground or Valhalla; the novelist, who, like Charles Reade in his wild romance of *The Cloister and the Hearth*, knows that "to save a human life, and that life a loved one: such moments are worth living for, ay three-score years and ten;" the artists who, from a Giotto to a Maxfield Parish, see that the world has no limits; and the poet who tells us,

> "Then from the dawn it seemed there came, but faint
> As from beyond the limit of the world,
> Like the last echo born of a great cry,
> Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
> Around a king returning from his wars."

—all these visions *are* heaven, if we will see them so. And they are Romance. It is for men, not merely to dream romances, but to create them, to live them.

The light by which we see the world comes out from our own souls. It may be the light of hell; it is more often the grey light of earth; it can be the light of heaven. "'Tis the good reader that makes the good book," says Emerson; and again, "The world is enlarged for us, not by new objects, but by finding more affinities and potencies in those we have." It is this which the child does instinctively. He is the prince he

Digitized by Google

dreams, he walks past bowing courtiers, through embattled castles; he fights unnumbered hosts of giants and wild beasts; he lives adventures in a world of gold and azure and loveliness. He fits all he knows of life into his dream, and this world of his creation is truer to him than everyday life. "We live among gods of our own creation." Wordsworth is right; heaven is near, is reached, by such creative imagination, heaven does often lie "about us in our infancy."

But, when the child grows up—

"Earth fills her lap with pleasures all her own;—
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came."

Earth, dull bare earth, with the mock "pleasures all her own," deceives man as to the truth, paints his life in harsh, drab colours, and tries to rob him, by enmeshing him in self-created lies, of those

"High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised."

And so we turn to the seers, the poets, the artists, who, to use Keat's words, teach us

"Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries."

When their best efforts fall short of realization, when their words, their pictures, their music are but faint echoes, "shadowy recollections," then we, the earthbound, say that they romance, and the dictionaries use such words as "extravagant" and "fanciful." But though we must recognize the fact that there are degrees of Romance, degrees of vision, of understanding, and inevitable distortion, yet in all Romance worthy the name is a vista to a larger truth. A single flash bespeaks the diamond. Hence the universal popularity of novels, of plays, of *romans d'aventures,* of operas, and of landscapes, which, in one sense, have no basis whatever in the plain facts of life, but which hint that excitement is a perversion of that intense yearning of the heart for God which will carry a man through the fiery trial; that passions both good and evil are, after all, revelations of how high pitched and vibrant immortal life really is; that adventure is fulfilled only in the final Quest of the Holy of Holies; that operas remind us of a time "when the morning stars sang together"; and that Nature is the vesture of God, which only the pure in heart may hope to see truly.

For the moment we are not concerned with the technicalities of an art, of how such effects are produced; nor of the fact that "realist" schools, so called, are seeking the same revelation by another method. The realist will meet Romance before his goal is attained. But Romance makes a contribution all its own, because it reveals itself. Deny its existence, and you rob yourself of the best of life—of all the plus qual-

Digitized by Google

ities, of spices, and of sugar coating. Accept it, and you are in touch with a mystery. For Romance is pre-eminently a quality of the heart, and so leads us to the heart of life.

From the foregoing, it will perhaps be divined that the Gods, the Masters, live lives of the truest Romance. And it is my belief that, as in heaven the everyday life of a Master is one long, thrilling, adventurous Romance, so on earth the greatest Romances ever enacted have had something of the life of the Masters in them. For it is immortal life that is the home of Romance, and there must be the touch of immortality to create Romance.

It becomes, therefore, of special significance to discover that Romance, both as a technical word in the history of literature, and as an intellectual conception, seems specifically restricted to the Christian era. For this would suggest that the incarnation of the Master Christ infused the necessary consciousness into mankind to conceive of Romance. He, so to speak, brought the consciousness of Romance with him, when he came. Romance existed before, but men did not see it, their capacity to appreciate it lay dormant within them, not yet awakened by cyclic evolution. Only those who had risen above the world and claimed their immortality, had any conception of life as romantic. The Romance of Christ's life and nature, his presence in men's hearts, awoke the higher, the new consciousness in them. A new light had come into the world, all life and nature were filled with a new radiance. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of *lights,* with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

It is a fact that the word Romance itself first appears applied to the language of Gaul or France, as it developed from the Roman or Latin language at the close of the "dark ages." Coincident with this "Romance" language, appeared a body of literature, the first truly romantic literature to exist; which literature, because it was written in this Romance language, came to be called "Romance." So the special language, and the special literature appeared approximately together. The gradual development of romance literature, embodying certain new ideas, formulated a new conception, that of Romance itself, or the romantic, with which everyone is to-day familiar, but which, before A. D. 1000, was not sufficiently present in the minds of men to produce literature. It can be seen, however, in the lives and words of early Christian soldiers and saints.

There is no equivalent that we can discover in any pre-Christian language, within the historic period, for the word, or for the idea, romance. Romance appears specifically to be a development of Christian civilization, and I should go further and say that it is characteristically Christian. This is so clearly recognized an historic fact that Webster defines Romance as "Pertaining or appropriate to the style of the Christian and popular literature of the Middle Ages, as opposed to the classical antique."

The Romans, the Greeks, the Semitic races, probably even the Chinese, Persians, and Hindus, had no conception of life

Digitized by Google

such as is conveyed to us by the adjective romantic. We, looking back on events in Greek life, for example, as it is depicted in their literature, call this and another incident romantic, or a romance. Perhaps the loves of Hero and Leander might serve as an excellent illustration. The Christian world conceives this story as filled with romantic beauty; but we read into it the feelings and understanding of our own hearts. The original poem of Musæus—whether he be the chosen disciple and spiritual son of Orpheus (about 1400 B. C.) as Virgil and Suidas celebrate, or a fourth century poet of the same name—the poem *itself* does not contain or set forth *our* ideas. It is, even in translation, an exquisite poem, full of lyric beauty; of rare simplicity, and portraying high passion and a noble virility. But both Hero and Leander are children. It is delightful to see two doves billing and cooing. The doves, perhaps, might be said to know what they are doing, in a way. Sweethearts of five and four are also aware, in a sense, of what they are doing. But though many of the romantic elements are present, true Romance is lacking, because the self-consciousness of the individuals is incomplete. It is grown men and women who see Romance in the little loves of children, not the children themselves. Romance, if it reveal immortal life, must be mature, must have the self-consciousness of the heart to be complete. The loves of Hero and Leander might have been mature, their ultimate experience was certainly maturing, but the Greek poem which is our source, does not so render them.

It is very difficult to illustrate such a point by comparing a late translation from the Greek, with an equally sophisticated translation of such an early example of Romance as *Aucassin and Nicolette;* a reading of both the poems entire would more easily establish the contrast. Yet, compare with the love of Aucassin, that of Leander, as rendered by Fawkes in the following passage:

> "Yet, beauteous Hero, grant a lover's prayer,
> And to my wishes prove as kind as fair.
> As Venus' priestess, just to Venus prove,
> Nor shun the gentle offices of love.
> O let us, while the happy hour invites,
> Propitious, celebrate the nuptial rites. . . .
> Then, as you fear the goddess to offend,
> In me behold your husband and your friend,
> Ordained by Cupid, greatest god above,
> To teach you all the mysteries of love."

Separated from Nicolette by a storm:—

> "'Neath the keep of strong Beaucaire,
> On a day of summer fair,
> At his pleasure, Aucassin
> Sat with baron, friend and kin.

Digitized by Google

Then upon the scent of flowers,
Song of birds, and golden hours,
Full of beauty, love, regret,
Stole the dream of Nicolette,
Came the tenderness of years;
So he drew apart in tears."

The Greeks found beauty in nature; they did not find love. Cupid could teach love, but Cupid never gave his heart to men. Aucassin finds love, finds romance, in the song of birds, in the scent of flowers. He has felt, he is conscious of that "Sacred Heart," which is ever on his lips, even in this early poem. "Nicolette searched his hurt, and perceived that the shoulder was out of joint. She handled it so deftly with her white hands, and used such skilful surgery, that by the grace of God (who loveth all true lovers) the shoulder came back to its place."

God was in his world, not as thundering Jove on Mount Olympus, but as Father, interested in and loving his children. The incarnation of the Son of God, an incarnation motived by pure love of God and men, brought love, a new love, into the world. And as the heart is the centre of love-consciousness, so the world to-day has had a heart infused into it. The gods, the Masters, no longer are felt to stand above or apart from the world of nature and of men, but are immanent in them; their celestial radiance shines upon them, as

". . . that sustaining Love
Which, through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
That fire for which all thirst."

A Romance is not the word which we should use naturally about the life of Christ. Yet, if we examine that life in terms of Romance, each and all of the elements are present, proving to us that it is, what it must be, the greatest example of Romance "come true" that the earth has so far seen. Mr. George Saintsbury has analysed the elements of Romance, from the literary point of view, in so acute and able a manner, that we shall take over his terms almost bodily; laying, however, a somewhat different stress upon certain of those elements which do not much concern him in a strictly literary essay, but which have a special interest for us. Mr. Saintsbury's article in the 11th edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (vol. xxiii, pp. 500-504) to which we refer, is by far the best essay on the subject we have seen—more comprehensive, and showing with the temperance of the scholar, a deeper understanding and insight, than that of any of the older studies. He appreciates all that Mr. Babbitt fails to realize, that Mr. Ker undervalues, and that Scott ignores. He suggests that Romance comprises, in order, "war, love, and religion; . . . the typical rather than individual character; . . . the admix-

Digitized by Google

ture of the marvellous, not merely though mainly as part of the religious element; the presence of the chivalrous ideal;" and, together with "adventure," "the world-old motive of the quest."

Each and all of these elements will be seen to have their ultimate source in spiritual life, in the life of the disciple, and of the Master. It cannot be found anywhere else—there is no final explanation of the *raison d'être* for war, for love, for religion, for chivalry, outside the fullness of immortal, spiritual life. There has been no greater single fight than that waged in the temple at Jerusalem and on Cavalry. There has been no greater adventure than the quest of a whole world of hearts, nor one inspired by a greater love. Nor has there ever been a finer consideration of the feelings of others, a more superb self-restraint, a more absolute loyalty, greater self-sacrifice, more magnificent heroism—in a word, such ideal chivalry, as that portrayed in the Gospel narratives.

It was the incarnation of Christ which, endowing us with heart, made such things part of our human consciousness, made us *self-conscious* of them, not merely as isolated virtues, but as a unity, as an individual perfection necessary to establish the ideal man, and the ideal state of society. Christ added to the very trees and flowers a magic they had not possessed before; and I am convinced if we could hear the way birds sang 100 B. C. we should inevitably discern that their song to-day had deepened in quality, springing more from the heart and appealing more to the heart. Must not the incarnation of every Avatar as set forth in theosophic teaching, bring with it a new, individual gift from the Lodge for the whole manifested universe? This new consciousness of the heart then, may be regarded as the distinguishing mark of the whole cycle of Christianity, which the classical age had never known. In its realization, the literature, the art, of our world, entered upon a new cycle, a new phase, the cycle of the heart, and of the self-consciousness, the maturity, which comes when we awake to the realization of love.

Romance is, therefore, for us, an achievement of Christianity. Mr. Saintsbury, striving to distinguish between all the adventure and story-telling of the Ancients, and the Romances of Christianity, notes that "two things were still wanting which were all-powerful in the romances proper—Chivalry and Religion." There is no literature, outside specific scriptural writing, that expresses the religious-mindedness of man so completely as Romance-literature—which puts Christianity as the basis of its whole structure—and that depends so completely upon a strictly religious interpretation of life, upon so high a moral ethic. Mr. Saintsbury emphasizes "The singular *purity* of the romances as a whole"; and he says, "In a very wide reading of romance the present writer does not remember more than two or three passages of romance proper (that is to say before the later part of the 15th century) which could be called obscene by any fair judge." Illicit love, as we now judge such things, is freely portrayed, but "it is never spoken of lightly and is always punished; nor are the pictures of it ever coarsely drawn."

Digitized by Google

Together with its elevated tone, Romance literature portrays chivalry; and as a consequence, the world to-day conceives of Romance as imbued with the chivalric ideal. Romance appeals to the hero, and to the heroic; another clue as to its acting as a guide to the inner world; because, contained within the Greek traditions (*cf.*, for example, Hesiod, *Works and Days, Works,* II. 187-224) were echoes, and more than echoes, of the Third Race, when the *Nirmanakayas* reappeared "as Kings, Rishis and heroes," as Madame Blavatsky tells us in the *Secret Doctrine.* The memory, and almost the deification, of heroes, from Greek and also Scandinavian sources, persisted into the period of the Middle Ages when Romance literature appeared. So we find included the whole cycle of "quest" romances, depicting more or less vaguely and generally the initiations of the knight or "hero."

The chivalric ideal, the Quest, the exaltation of women, the consecration of life to a cause, as that of religion, or of the church, or of a lady, or of honour—these things are the outward expression of Romance, are the efforts made by mankind to bring Romance out of the land of dreams, into everyday life. And we miss the import of these phases of human endeavour if we fail to discern that they carry with them the vitality of spiritual life. It is the genius of great minds to have visualized them; it is the rarer genius of great men actually to have lived them. For Romance *has* "come true," and some day we shall all live our perfect Romance.

A. G.

To praise God means that all his life long a man glorifies, reverences, and venerates the Divine Omnipotence. The praise of God is the meet and proper work of the angels and the saints in heaven, and of loving men on earth. God should be praised by desire, by the lifting up of all our powers, by words, by works, with body and with soul, and with whatsoever one possesses; in humble service, from without and from within. He who does not praise God while here on earth shall in eternity be dumb.—JOHN OF RUYSBROECK.

Digitized by Google

HUMAN IMMORTALITY AND PRE-EXISTENCE

II

THE second half of Dr. M'Taggart's book is, as we have said, of even greater interest than the first.* It constitutes one of the best popular expositions we have seen of the philosophic rationale of reincarnation. It restates the principal arguments, familiar to students of Theosophy, for believing that, "if men are immortal, it is more probable that the beginning of the present life, in which each of us finds himself now, was not the beginning of his whole existence, but that he lived before it, as he will live after it." Dr. M'Taggart refers to the fact that, though declared heretical by the early Church at Rome, "there seems nothing in pre-existence incompatible with any of the dogmas which are generally accepted as fundamental in Christianity"; and he points out that " it was taught by Buddha and Plato, and is usually associated with the belief in immortality in the far east." "Why," he asks, "should men who are so anxious to-day to prove that we shall live after this life is ended, regard the hypothesis that we have already survived the end of a life, as one which is beneath consideration? . . . I do not see how existence in future time could be shown to be necessary in the case of any being whose existence in past time is admitted not to be necessary."

When it is granted that immortality and pre-existence are logically bound together, Dr. M'Taggart proceeds to a consideration of the reasons for believing that their truth implies the probability of a long cycle of births and deaths through reincarnation. "Each man would have at least three lives, his present life, one before it, and one after it. It seems more probable, however, that this would not be all, and that his existence before and after his present life would in each case be divided into many lives, each bounded by birth and death."

"If we accept immortality and reject a plurality of lives, . . . we must hold that the causes, whatever they are, which operate on each of us so as to cause his death once, will never operate again on any of us through all future time, . . . the death which ends his present life for each of us will change profoundly and permanently the conditions of all future life. And for this there seems no justification. . .

"It might be admitted that a state of absolute perfection would render further death improbable. But even the best men are not, when they die, in such a state of intellectual and moral perfection as would fit them to enter heaven immediately, if heaven is taken as a state of absolute perfection which renders all further improvement unnecessary and

* *Human Immortality and Pre-existence*, by Dr. J. Ellis M'Taggart, published by Longmans, Green & Co.

Digitized by Google

impossible. . . But if our existence after our present life is imperfect, and a state of improvement and advance, it has not yet reached that absolute perfection which might make future deaths improbable. And it seems to me that the natural inference from this view . . . is that this life will be followed by others like it, each separated from its predecessor and successor by death and rebirth. For otherwise we should be limited to the hypothesis that a process of development begun in a single life bounded by death, would be continued as an indefinitely long life, not divided by birth and death at all. And to suppose, without any reason, such a change from the order of our present experience seems unjustifiable."

In addition to the argument drawn from the "law of cycles," as it is termed in theosophic literature,—whereby day follows night, summer winter, and periods of outbreathing succeed those of inbreathing,—Dr. M'Taggart considers the necessity of the causes which we have put in motion, working out to their conclusions. "We continually find that death leaves a fault without retribution, a retribution without a repentance, a preparation without an achievement, while, in other cases, where the life has lasted longer, a similar process is complete between birth and death. If men survive death, we must expect that these processes, when not worked out before death, will be worked out in a future life." Without mention of Karma, as such, he shows its determining influence upon the question of reincarnation; and one by one rephrases, omitting all technical terms, many of the classic theosophical arguments.

He adduces the differences in personal character and circumstance, and the strength of the ties which bind our hearts to our friends, as two features of our present life which can be explained more satisfactorily on the basis of reincarnation than on any other. "Two people who have seen but little of each other are often drawn together by a force equal to that which is generated in other cases by years of mutual trust and mutual assistance. The significance of this fact has been, I think, very much underrated. . . On the theory of pre-existence such relations would naturally be explained by the friendships of past lives. The love which comes at first sight, and the love which grows up through many years in this life, would be referred to similar causes, whose similarity would account for the similarity of the effects. Each would have arisen through long intimacy, and the only difference between them would be that, in one case, the intimacy had been suspended by death and re-birth.

"Again, as a man grows up, certain tendencies and qualities make themselves manifest in him. They cannot be entirely due to his environment, for they are often very different in people whose environment has been very similar. We call these the man's natural character, and assume that he came into life with it. Such tendencies and qualities, since they are not due to anything which happens after birth, may be called innate, as far as the present life is concerned.

Digitized by Google

"Now when we look at the natural characters of men, we find that in many cases they possess qualities strongly resembling those which, as we learn by direct experience, can be produced in the course of a single life. One man seems to start with an impotence to resist some particular temptation, which exactly resembles the impotence which has been produced in another man by continually yielding to the same temptation. One man, again, has through life a calm and serene virtue, which another gains only by years of strenuous effort. . . If we hold the doctrine of pre-existence, we shall naturally explain these, also, as being the condensed results of experience—in this case, of experience in an earlier life."

The part played by heredity, often held to be sufficiently determinative of a man's innate character to nullify this argument for pre-existence, is discussed at some length; and the reader is led to see that, so far from the action of heredity being opposed to the law of Karma, it may be regarded as but a means whereby that law is fulfilled—part of the machinery by which the reincarnating ego obtains, in each life, bodily and personal characteristics expressive of the inner character he has built up through past lives.

"If a man's character is determined by his previous lives, how can it also be determined by the character of the ancestors by whose bodies his body was generated?

"There is, however, no real difficulty here. . . The character which a man has at any time is modified by circumstances which happen to him at that time, and may well be modified by the fact that his re-birth is in a body descended from ancestors of a particular character.

"Thus the two ways in which the character in this life is said to be determined need not be inconsistent, since they can both co-operate in the determination, the tendencies inherited with the body modifying the character as it was left at the end of the previous life. But there is no impossibility in supposing that the characteristics in which we resemble the ancestors of our bodies, may be to some degree characteristics due to our previous lives. In walking through the streets of London, it is extremely rare to meet a man whose hat shows no sort of adaptation to his head. Hats in general fit their wearers with far greater accuracy than they would if each man's hat were assigned to him by lot. And yet there is very seldom any causal connection between the shape of the head and the shape of the hat. A man's head is never made to fit his hat, and, in the great majority of cases, his hat is not made to fit his head. The adaptation comes about by each man selecting, from hats made without any special reference to his particular head, the hat which will suit his particular head best.

"This may help us to see that it would be possible to hold that a man whose nature had certain characteristics when he was about to be re-born, would be re-born in a body descended from ancestors of a similar character. His character when re-born would, in this case, be decided, as far as the points in question went, by his character in his

Digitized by Google

previous life, and not by the character of the ancestors of his new body. But it would be the character of the ancestors of the new body, and its similarity to his character, which determined the fact that he was re-born in that body rather than another. The shape of the head—to go back to our analogy—does not determine the shape of the hat, but it does determine the selection of this particular hat for this particular head."

Dr. M'Taggart's discussion of this point is particularly valuable because it makes no effort to insist upon a theoretical degree of adjustment (of inherited bodily and temperamental characteristics to the individual innate character) greater than the observed facts of life justify. As a man must choose his hat from those obtainable in the shops at the time he comes to buy—though their fashion may not please him—so the reincarnating ego is limited in its choice of bodies, and to obtain one element, which it wants, must take others that it does not want. Thus it is that a man's true self and character are often submerged under hereditary characteristics that are in no permanent sense his own, but pertain solely to his instrument. These must be worked through, and sloughed off, before we really become ourselves, and this is no small part of the difficulty that confronts each one of us.

Students of Theosophy will not find it hard, however, to reconcile this apparent divergence from perfect adjustment—this modification of personal character by the circumstances and heredity of birth—with the universal justice of Karmic law. Though Dr. M'Taggart does not deal at length with this phase of the question, he points out that the ties which we form with those we love become such a close and intimate part of the nature of the self, and involve so many unfinished interactions, that it must be supposed that those who were associated together in the past must come together in the future. We might speak of this as group reincarnation, and it goes far to make clear what might otherwise be obscure. It bears directly on the modification of the individual character which heredity may cause. As we, in past lives, have influenced for good or bad the character of those with whom we were associated, so is it just that they should influence us; and the hereditary modification of character, which we receive from our parents, may be regarded as precisely such an interaction.

A question that is frequently asked is, How is each person brought into connection with the new body that is most appropriate to him? To this Dr. M'Taggart answers:

"I do not see any difficulty here. We know that various substances, which have chemical affinities for one another, will meet and combine, separating themselves to do so, from other substances with which they have been in previous connection. And we do not see anything so strange or paradoxical in this result as to make us unwilling to recognize its truth. There seems to me nothing more strange or paradoxical in the suggestion that each person enters into connection with the body which is most fitted to be connected with him. And if there were any difficulty

Digitized by Google

in this supposition, it is a difficulty which would be just as serious for the theory adopted by most believers in immortality who reject pre-existence."

One of the most interesting sections of the book deals with the question of memory. To Dr. M'Taggart, "it is certain that in this life we remember no previous lives, whether it be because we have forgotten them, or because there have been none to remember," and though we may well question the universal validity of this assumption, it is clearly true of the vast majority of mankind, and it raises the fundamental problem of the personal value of an immortality which appears, for most men as they now are, to proceed through life after life, blotting out the memory of each as it is completed. Dr. M'Taggart handles this problem in masterly fashion, and it will well repay us to follow the outline of his argument.

"Sometimes, indeed," he begins, "it has been asserted that such a state would not be immortality at all. Without memory of my present life, it is said, my future life would not be mine. If memory ceases at the death of my body, I cease with it, and I am not immortal.

"If each life had no continuity with its successors, and no effect on them, then indeed there might be little meaning in calling them lives of the same person. But we cannot suppose that this would be the case. If the same self passes through various lives, any change which happens to it at any time must affect its state in the time immediately subsequent, and through this in all future time. Death and re-birth, no doubt, are of sufficient importance to modify a character considerably, but they could only act on what was already present, and the nature with which each individual starts in any life would be moulded by his experiences and actions in the past. And this is sufficient to make the identity between the different lives real. . . .

"We may then say that, in spite of the loss of memory, it is the same person who lives in the successive lives. But has such immortality as this any value for the person who is immortal?

"I do not propose to discuss whether any immortality has any value. . . . All that I shall maintain is that the loss of memory need not render immortality valueless if it would not have been valueless without the loss of memory.

"If existence beyond the present life is not expected to improve, and yet immortality is regarded as valuable, it must be because a life no better than this is looked on as possessing value. . . And if this life has value without any memory beyond itself, why should not future lives have value without memory beyond themselves? . . .

"But immortality is not only, or chiefly, desired because it will give us more life like our present life. Its attraction is chiefly for those people who believe that the future life will be, at any rate for many of us, a great improvement on the present. . . And it might be said that our

Digitized by Google

chief ground for hoping for a progressive improvement after death would be destroyed if memory periodically ceased. . .

"We must ask, therefore, what elements of value are carried on by memory from the present to the future. And then we must consider whether they can be carried on without memory. . .

"The value of memory, then, is that by its means the past may serve the wisdom, the virtue, and the love of the present. If the past could help the present in a like manner without the aid of memory, the absence of memory need not destroy the chance of an improvement spreading over many lives.

"Let us consider wisdom first. Can we be wiser by reason of something which we have forgotten. Unquestionably we can. Wisdom is not merely, or chiefly, amassed facts, or even recorded judgments. It depends primarily on a mind qualified to deal with facts, and to form judgments. . . And so a man who dies after acquiring knowledge—and all men acquire some—might enter his new life, deprived indeed of his knowledge, but not deprived of the increased strength and delicacy of mind which he had gained in acquiring the knowledge. And, if so, he will be wiser in the second life because of what has happened in the first.

"Of course he loses something in losing the actual knowledge. . . And is not this loss really a gain? For the mere accumulation of knowledge, if memory never ceased, would soon become overwhelming, and worse than useless. What better fate could we wish for than to leave such accumulations behind us, preserving their greatest value in the mental faculties which have been strengthened by their acquisition?

"With virtue the point is perhaps clearer. For the memory of moral experiences is of no value to virtue except in so far as it helps to form the moral character, and, if this is done, the loss of the memory would be no loss to virtue. Now we cannot doubt that a character may remain determined by an event which has been forgotten. I have forgotten the greater number of the good and evil acts which I have done in my present life. And yet each must have left a trace on my character. And so a man may carry over into his next life the dispositions and tendencies which he has gained by the moral contests of this life, and the value of those experiences will not have been destroyed by the death which has destroyed the memory of them.

"There remains love. The problem here is more important, if, as I believe, it is in love, and in nothing else, that we find not only the supreme value of life, but also the supreme reality of life, and, indeed, of the universe. The gain which the memory of the past gives us here is that the memory of past love for any person can strengthen our present love of him. And this is what must be preserved, if the value of past love is not to be lost. The knowledge we acquire, and the efforts which we make, are directed to ends not themselves. But love has no

Digitized by Google

end but itself. If it has gone, it helps us little that we keep anything it has brought us."

We cannot summarize Dr. M'Taggart's full discussion. The reader must turn to the book itself—and will be richly repaid in doing so. But we cannot resist quoting certain further passages, which will show the direction in which his thought continues.

"Now we know that present love can also be stronger and deeper because of past love which we have forgotten. Much has been forgotten in any friendship, which has lasted for several years within the limits of a single life—many confidences, many services, many hours of happiness and sorrow. But they have not passed without leaving their mark on the present. They contribute, though they are forgotten, to the present love, which is not forgotten. . .

"In other words, people who are joined by love cannot be dependent for their proximity to each other—and consequently for the possibility of their love—on some chance or mechanical arrangement whose recurrence we could have no reason to expect. Their love is not the effect of proximity, but its cause. For their love is the expression of the ultimate fact that each of them is more closely connected with the other than he is with people in general. And proximity in a particular life, like everything else, is the effect—or, rather, the manifestation under particular circumstances—of those relations which make up the eternal nature of the universe. . .

"If by any means we make our relations stronger and finer, then they will be stronger and finer at the next meeting. What more do we want? The past is not preserved in memory, but it exists, concentrated and united, in the present. Death is thus the most perfect example of the 'collapse into immediacy'—that mysterious phrase of Hegel's—where all that was before a mass of hard-earned acquisitions, has been merged into the unity of a developed character."

The power and dignity of this concept of the immortal life of all mankind, might well reconcile us to the recurring and permanent loss of memory, were it indeed a *necessary* consequence of the truth of reincarnation. But it must be noted that Dr. M'Taggart does not so present it, nor is it so in fact. His whole discussion is based upon the assumption that, as a matter of common observation, and in at least the vast majority of men, memory of the past has not persisted or is not available; and his argument is directed to showing that, despite this loss of memory, reincarnation means for every man an immortality of priceless value, offering the opportunity for progress and growth, and storing in the reincarnating self the distilled essence of the lessons and experience of past lives, rendering them available for present use. As we saw in discussing the question of the immortality of personal traits, this freeing ourselves of incumbrances, and leaving behind the waste products of the past, is precisely what we would wish wherever we have departed from those permanent purposes, in loyalty to which the immortal self

Digitized by Google

realizes its true identity. From such departures and failures we desire only to preserve the lesson, and could ask nothing better than that all else connected with them should pass into the oblivion of forgetfulness. Yet if there be much that we can only wish to forget, there are other experiences that we would pray might remain with us, always in memory—an inseparable part of our immortal life and consciousness; and surely we should hope for a time when we may learn to live aright. Will memory then be retained?

In considering this question we must note that whereas Dr. M'Taggart was dealing with the problem of human immortality in general, we are now proposing to consider but a very special class, and what cannot be adduced of the general case may be true of the more limited one. Thus it would not be possible to prove from the definition of a triangle that its three angles were equal, for this is patently not true of all triangles. But it is a property that is possessed by a certain class of triangles, namely, the equilateral triangles. And if we add to the general definition of triangles the further charactertistic of equal sides—which differentiates this sub-class—the truth of the proposition is easily proved. Dr. M'Taggart can establish from his general premises only such general conclusions regarding human immortality and human memory as are valid for all mankind as a consequence of their bare humanity. But it by no means follows that more may not be adduced in regard to men of whom we may predicate not only the common human nature, but also the definite aspiration and will to conform their lives to spiritual purposes and principles. The immortality and memory attained by such a special class may be very different from the minimum which is all that can be demonstrated of mankind in general. And, as it is open to every man to make himself a member of the special class, a far greater degree of personal immortality and a far more persistent memory of the past may be possible of attainment than that which Dr. M'Taggart suggests.

Now to students of Theosophy it is very far from certain that *no one* in this life remembers the experiences of past lives. The East is full of recorded instances of the manifestation of such memory; and though the thought of the West offers little temptation to confess it, there may be those who can remember the feeling and incidents of former lives as vividly as the happenings of yesterday. Though Dr. M'Taggart's purpose requires him to consider the ordinary and not the exceptional case, yet the existence of exceptional cases is sufficient to prove their possibility and to make it evident that the question of personal memory is primarily a question of the centre and content of personal consciousness, and that its permanence or impermanence must depend upon the same factors as determine the immortality or death of the personality, as distinct from the immortality of the soul.

It is far too complex a subject to be discussed in detail here, yet there are certain obvious characteristics of the way in which memory operates, which it will be well to recall in considering the common

Digitized by Google

unconsciousness of any recollection of former lives. In the first place, it is very rare that any memory should be absolutely continuous, that is, that it should never be absent from consciousness. At any given time the vast bulk of our memories are latent, rather than present or actual. They are recalled into consciousness in one of two ways: either by act of will, as when we *try* to remember, by seeking to link our present state of consciousness to the past, or automatically, by some inner or outer object or happening that is in some manner connected with the object or happening remembered—our mind travelling back along that connection, sometimes so slowly that we are conscious of the step by step nature of the process, sometimes so rapidly that we are quite unconscious of what the connection has been. Now it is clear that even though the memory of past lives existed, latent in my consciousness, precisely as does the memory of past days of this life, if I had no belief or thought of pre-existence I should never call these latent memories into present actuality by any act of will—for there would be nothing to prompt this will. And it is also clear that whatever connection exists between any object or happening in this life, and some similar or other object or happening of a past life, is a connection that can exist in consciousness only through the immortal part of my self—a part which was aware of the former happening as it is aware of the present. To travel back along this thread of connection, involves, therefore, the lifting of the personal consciousness, in at least some particular, to the consciousness of the immortal self. The facility with which this can be done, and hence the probability of a man's doing it, may range from such ease as to be instinctive and automatic, to such difficulty as to be almost impossible, according to the degree of his inner development and the habitual level of his personal thought and interests.

Again, there are the common phenomena of unplaced memories. A landscape, a face, a line of verse, or some past feeling will rise into consciousness without our being able to place its origin and associations. We do not know where we have seen, or heard, or felt what we now remember. Sometimes we are able to recall the association we have with it; sometimes we cannot. It is probable that the memory of past lives would come to us, first, in just such fragmentary uncoördinated snatches, and that we have far more of such recollections than we realize, because it never occurs to us to think of or to place them for what they are.

Consider, finally, the selective action of memory. Of the vast number of impressions that reach my consciousness through my senses, I remember very few. We are not conscious of all the causes which may make us remember one thing and forget another, but, broadly speaking, we remember the things that are related to our present thought and purpose, and do not remember, or remember less clearly, what is foreign to it. Purpose, and continuity of purpose, play a vital part in all questions of memory. To use Dr. M'Taggart's simile in a different connec-

Digitized by Google

tion, if I enter the Burlington Arcade for the express purpose of purchasing a special kind of travelling cap, I am far more likely to remember the Arcade, and the details of the purchase, during my travels, than if I had only happened to pass through the Arcade and had bought the first hat I happened to see. It is the same with life. We attain continuity of memory as we attain continuity of purpose. We have seen that the memory of past lives can only be transmitted to the personal consciousness, which is ours in this life, through the memory of the immortal self. It seems natural to suppose that the memories of the immortal self will be vivid or blurred for the same causes as those we see operate in our everyday experience. If we live a life expressive of the continuous purpose of the immortal self, dealing with people, circumstances and events in accordance with the will of that self, then these people, circumstances and events should make a far clearer impression upon its consciousness, and so upon its memory. But if we deal with life only as it affects that which is temporal in us, as it gratifies our bodily senses or impermanent desires, then the separate incidents of such a life would concern our immortal self but little, and only their essence, or lessons, would be gathered up and stored in memory. Here also, we see that personal memory, as personal immortality, is a question of personal life, and of inner and outer character.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

Christ, the Eternal Sun, shining into the open heart, causes that heart to grow and to bloom, and it overflows with all the inward powers with joy and sweetness.

So the wise man will do like the bee, and he will fly forth with attention and with reason and with discretion, towards all those gifts and towards all that sweetness which he has ever experienced, and towards all the good which God has ever done to him. And in the light of love and with inward observation, he will taste of the multitude of consolations and good things, and will not rest upon any flower of the gifts of God, but, laden with gratitude and praise, will fly back into the unity, wherein he wishes to rest and to dwell eternally with God.—JOHN OF RUYSBROECK.

Digitized by Google

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

XI

The Friars Minor and St. Francis of Assisi

CAPTAIN FERDINAND BELMONT, one of the heroic French dead, in a letter to his parents, a short while before his death in action, wrote: "All we see in this world are appearances, forms, and isolated effects; we cannot conclude anything from them." One repeats with helplessness this comment of Belmont, when one's duty is to arrive at a conclusion about the life and work of a saint. How can a student give to others anything but queries or speculations? Truth can be known only from the position of the Lodge; on earth, the best we can do is to speculate reverently. One feels especially helpless when the saint in the case is Francis of Assisi. His selflessness, his other-worldly charm, his vigour,—something of these one could hope to pass on to others through passages chosen from the old books in which he is so lovingly and so vividly portrayed.

Of the early sources of information about St. Francis, two are noteworthy. These are the *Little Flowers,* and the *Legend of the Three Companions.* Both are narrations of incidents in the life of the saint. These narratives are not complete or chronological, and they were written some years after his death. But they portray a man of extraordinary humility, prayer, and zeal. They are sources from which later writers take the poetic and moving scenes they narrate—such as the *Sermon to the Birds,* and the *Wolf of Gubbio.* Reading them after a modern critical interpretation, one feels: "Here is the man, the saint, about whom the other book was talking." Of the two, the *Legend of the Three Companions*[1] confines itself more closely to Francis—the *Little Flowers* includes incidents from the lives of those who joined him. Neither book gives dates or other biographical detail. But they give the real man. Biographical matter one can get easily from an encyclopedia.

His life is of intense interest because we can watch the process of his becoming a saint. Too often, nothing of this process has come down in the old writings that tell of other saints. We can see the youth Francis busy with the world till it turns to ashes in his mouth. He then starts on a quest that finally brings him to the Master, and he advances along the Path of Discipleship until he reaches the stage of the Stigmata.

He was born in 1182, and died in 1226; he is thus twelve years younger than St. Dominic whom he survived five years. He begins his work about fifty years after St. Bernard's death, and he antedates St. Catherine of Siena by a century and a half. The forty-four years of his life are divided just in half by his conversion, which began when he

[1] The Three Companions are three of Francis's earliest and best loved followers.

Digitized by Google

was twenty-two. After two years of brooding and prayer, he becomes sure of his vocation, and then for four years he is forming his Rule and gathering about him his first companions. With these, there begins an active ministry of about ten years, that is marked by an extraordinary increase of his followers. Then, in full-hearted devotion to his spouse, Lady Poverty, having surrendered so much to her, he is put finally to the severe test of forced relinquishment of his company. He had to witness, in his last six years, unbrotherly disputes among his brethren, and the falling away from their vows of many he had loved and trusted. He met the test courageously. We grieve for Francis, in those last years, as we do for Arthur, smitten with a deadly wound. But we feel that, as with Arthur, the fault and blame for any apparent failure, lies less with Francis than with others.

His youth seems to have been foolish but not vicious; prodigal and extravagant, but not debauched. His father was a rich silk merchant who encouraged and supported his son's expensive comradeship with young nobles. Perhaps from bad judgment, perhaps with the desire to make up for the difference in social position, Francis seems to have gone always beyond his comrades in prodigality and eccentricity of dress. He was like a college student, who becomes the leader of his fellows because he puts energy into the quest of diversions—saved from viciousness by a kind of miracle. With his friends, Francis fought in one of the countless feuds against neighbouring towns, and was taken prisoner to Perugia.

In a year, he was released. Illness came upon him after his return home, and, in his case, proved a blessing, giving him, what it gives to all, time for reflection, and conducing to repentance. Other mortifications followed this one of the body,—and more humiliating. With habitual extravagance of dress and outfit, he prepared to go as a member of a civic mission, only to return sadly the day after he had gaily started forth. The reasons given for this sudden change of plan are varied—some say it was a dream, warning him that he is not to be a mere knight of the court, but a cavalier of heaven; others say it was illness, or the resentment of his friends, envious of his expensive clothes. It may have been all three reasons. His life of idle merriment becomes interrupted by moments of seriousness. He spends less money upon himself, and gives to the poor. At times he avoids his friends, preferring seclusion: he is brooding. His friends regret these interruptions of seriousness, and they smile again when one day he announces a feast. The *Legend* narrates what happened at this feast. "So then he made a sumptuous banquet be made ready, as he had oft-times done afore. And when they came forth of the house, and his comrades together went before him, going through the city singing while he carried a wand in his hand as their master,—he was walking a little behind them, not singing, but meditating very earnestly. And lo! on a sudden he is visited of the Lord, and his heart is filled with such sweetness as that he can

Digitized by Google

neither speak nor move, nor is he able to feel and hear aught save that sweetness only, which did so estrange him from carnal sense that—as he himself afterwards said—had he then been pricked as with knives all over at once, he could not have moved from the spot. But when his comrades looked back, and saw him thus far off from them, they returned unto him in fear, staring upon him as one already changed into another man. And they questioned him saying: 'Whereon wast thou thinking, that thou camest not after us? Perchance thou wast thinking of taking a wife?' To whom he replied with a loud voice: 'Truly have ye spoken, for that I thought of taking unto me a bride nobler and richer and fairer than ever ye have seen.' And they mocked at him."

Soon after he went to Rome, perhaps seeking relief from inward pressure in outward observances. He saw the small offerings made by worshippers at St. Peter's. He opened his purse and threw out its entire contents. (It is his habitual prodigality, but no longer for self. That prodigality will be transformed into complete self-surrender to the Master.) Then, in contemplation of the niggardliness of his fellow pilgrims, he goes to the great public square of St. Peter, exchanges his own clothes for those of a beggar there, and stands all day, in the beggar's place, asking for gifts from the passers by. Again the prodigal!

That exchange for the beggar's filthy clothes prepared him for a new compassion which he mentions in his Will as the beginning of his religious life—his ministrations to lepers. "The Lord has granted to me, Brother Francis, thus to begin to do penance; that while I was in sin, it seemed to me too bitter a thing to see lepers, but the Lord led me among them, and I showed mercy to them. And when I left them, that which had appeared to me bitter was changed into sweetness of body and soul; and not long after this I forsook the world."

According to the Legend (Chap. IV), Francis was riding his horse, and reflecting upon the inward promptings. Suddenly he noticed a leper beside the road, and in disgust wheeled aside from him. The reaction was quick. Returning in shame and compassion, he gave all his money to the leper, and kissed his hand. Thus began his loving services to the wretches of the hospitals.

This was the first stage of his conversion—a gradual interior change during a period of two years, manifesting itself outwardly in a complete turning from frivolity to service of the needy. It required courage and involved sacrifice. The silk merchant had not checked his son's extravagance, so long as it was directed to a higher social class that could bring honour and advancement to the merchant's family. But upon beggars, that was quite different! The son's changing way of life pleased the father less and less. If it continued, a break must come. In place of his former time-killing, Francis had begun to walk, for reflection and meditation, outside the town, stopping to pray at little delapidated shrines. Two of these became spiritual landmarks, St. Damian's and the Chapel of Portiuncula. In St. Damian's, he first saw the Master. He

Digitized by Google

was praying. Suddenly he was aware of a Living Presence filling the Crucifix on the altar. It is not positively recorded that the Master spoke on this occasion. But Francis was moved by this favour to another decisive step. He would rebuild this delapidated shrine that had been so honoured. He hastened home, collected every saleable article of value that belonged to him, disposed of them in a neighboring town, and carried the money to the poor priest who tended St. Damian's. But his father, having made up his mind no longer to tolerate his son's folly, came upon him at this point, at St. Damian's, and, to avoid his anger, Francis hid, and did not venture back into the town for several weeks. The father's anger had not abated. He beat his son, and brought him before the magistrate, from whom Francis appealed to the Bishop, on the ground of being no longer a civilian, but a servant of the Church. Then occurred the famous scene which the old artists have painted. The father reproached his son for the great expense he had been. Francis withdrew for a few moments, and returned with all his clothes in his hands and a little money from his recent sale. He placed these at his father's feet and said quietly to the crowd: "Hear all ye, and understand: until now have I called Peter Bernardone my father, but, for that I purpose to serve the Lord, I give back unto him the money, over which he was vexed, and all the clothes that I have had of him, desiring to say only, 'Our Father, Which art in Heaven,' not my father, Peter Bernardone" (Legend, Chap. VI). The bishop and the crowd were convinced of his sincerity, and the bishop drew his own cloak around the disinherited son.

Thus cut off from his source of supply, Francis had to beg what was needed to repair the little Chapel. He went into the market place of Assisi, asking for stones, and carried them through the town to the Chapel. He begged oil for its lamps. Finally, he begged his own food, unwilling to be a tax upon the poor incumbent of St. Damian's. In time he completed the repairs. Then he set about restoring another tumbledown little Chapel where he had prayed, St. Mary of the Angels, better known as Portiuncula,—St. Mary's of the little portion. One morning after he had finished this second task, he was kneeling in the Chapel at Mass. The priest faced from the altar to read the Gospel for the day. Again Francis was aware of a Presence—living and acting through the priest. And he heard these words: "Wherever ye go, preach, saying, 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. Freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither silver nor gold nor brass in your purses, neither scrip nor two coats, nor shoes nor staff, for the labourer is worthy of his meat." Thus was Francis chosen, after he had shown his willingness to sacrifice everything in order to obey the call he had heard.

His example and his preaching—preaching enjoined upon him by the Master's living voice—attracted companions one by one. By 1210 these numbered eleven. To provide for an increasing following, and

Digitized by Google

to obtain authorization to preach without hindrance, he went with his associates in that year to Rome. With these first adherents, there had been no formal ties. They were drawn to Francis by the fire which contact with the Master had kindled in him. They saw his mode of living and the ecstatic Life that pulsed in him. They were eager to share the one in order to participate in the other also. His manner with the first inquirers was very simple. He took the first ones to the little Chapel of Portiuncula, and told them the command given him. To verify it, he then opened the Gospels three times. Each *time the book opened at a passage which reiterated or amplified the first command.*[2]

Francis declared to his companions that these passages contained their life and rule, and exhorted them to obey straightway these commands. The duties to which their own zeal urged them, served in place of the formal test of a novitiate. With boughs of trees they made small rude shelters adjacent to the Portiuncula Chapel where they might come together for common prayer and counsel when proximity made that possible. They went off by twos (three men had joined themselves to Francis almost simultaneously), working by day in the fields with the labourers, accepting food for their hire, but no money, eating and sleeping where and how they might, and speaking at the right moment of the things that burned in their hearts. Naturally they were regarded as rogues or idiots, and their modesty and industry did not shield them from the abuse and mockery that normal civilians mete out to the dishonest and disordered, when these latter come into their power. The Legend describes the real testing to which these early companions were subjected. "Two of them were at Florence, and they went through the city seeking a lodging, yet could find none. But when they came unto a certain house that had an oven in the porch, they said the one unto the other: 'Here we may take shelter.' Accordingly they asked the mistress of the house to receive them within the house, and, upon her refusal to do this, they said humbly that perchance she would allow them for that night at least to rest near the oven. This she granted, but her husband, when he came and found them on the porch, called his wife and said unto her: 'Wherefore hast thou granted these ribalds shelter in our porch?' She made answer that she had refused to receive them into the house, but had granted them to lie without the porch, where they could steal naught save the wood. So her husband would not allow that

[2] The three passages are these: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." "Jesus having called to him the Twelve, gave them power and authority over all devils and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere."

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul."

Digitized by Google

any shelter should be given unto them, albeit the cold was great, for that he thought them to be ribalds and thieves. That night, therefore, until morn they lay near the oven, sleeping but lightly, warmed only by the glow Divine, and covered only by the shelter of the Lady Poverty, and then went unto a Church hard by to hear matins. When morning came, the woman went unto that same Church, and seeing there those brethren continuing devoutly in prayer, she said unto herself: 'Were these men ribalds and thieves, as said my husband, they would not thus continue reverently in prayer.' While she was pondering these things inwardly, behold, a man named Guido was bestowing alms on the poor that were waiting in that Church, and when he had come unto the brethren, and would fain have given unto each of them money, as he was giving unto the rest, they refused his money, and would not take it. But he said unto them: 'Wherefore do ye, being poor, not take money as do the rest?" Replied Brother Bernard: 'True is it that we be poor, but poverty is not a hard thing unto us, as unto the other poor, for by the grace of God, Whose counsel we have fulfilled, of our own accord have we made ourselves poor.' At this the man marvelled, and, asking them if they had ever had possessions, he learnt from them that they had had great possessions, but for the love of God had given all unto the poor. For he that thus made answer was that Brother Bernard, the second to the Blessed Francis, whom to-day we truly hold as our most holy father; he was the first to embrace the message of peace and repentance, and did run to follow the holy man of God, and, selling all that he had, and giving it unto the poor according unto the counsel of Gospel perfection, did continue unto the end in most holy poverty. Wherefore the said woman, taking thought upon this, that the brethren would have none of the money, went unto them and said that gladly would she receive them into her house, if they would come thither for the sake of being her guests. To whom they humbly made answer: 'The Lord repay thee for thy goodwill.' But the man aforesaid, hearing that the brethren had not been able to find a lodging, brought them into his house, saying: 'Behold a lodging made ready for you of the Lord, abide therein according unto your good pleasure.' And they, giving God thanks, abode with him for some days, edifying him both by ensample and by word in the fear of the Lord, so that thereafter he bestowed much of his wealth on the poor."

The efforts of these four comrades brought in three more recruits, thus making seven. The new friends went out at once to bear their own testimony, and four more were gained. The number of the little band was thus (including Francis) twelve. To facilitate their preaching (not to lessen their hardships), Francis decided to ask the approbation of the Church. This was in 1210.

The visit to Rome was not entirely futile. It was inevitable that he should be suspected of heresy—his manner of life was that of the Albigeois preachers. However, Francis's humility and sincerity gave

Digitized by Google

no fuel to the suspicious. He was advised to enter one of the established Orders or to become a hermit—not to set up a new form of religious living. He humbly but firmly resisted these persuasions. Disarmed, though not won, the Roman authorities dismissed him, bidding him return when his followers had increased. There was no official approbation. He was told he might preach after obtaining the consent of the local ecclesiastical incumbents. And he was told he could grant the privilege of preaching to his comrades upon similar conditions—they were to be held responsible by Francis. He was given an overseer, one of the Cardinals, and this overseer, with the intention of putting an ecclesiastical badge upon the lay workers, tonsured them before they left Rome.

What had been won by the visit to Rome was nothing more than a non-committal toleration of their preaching. Francis was so humble, however, that he accepted with sincere appreciation this neutral act, and spoke of it with unfeigned warmth. His warmth and enthusiasm were passed on to the miscellaneous auditors who heard him, with the consequence that he appeared to them with a new dignity, and drew many more associates. But for some time after his visit, he continued uncertain of his method of work. Returning toward Assisi, he stopped with his friends in an old shed at the edge of a hillside wood. This shed was so small that Francis had to portion off its space in the most frugal and systematic manner in order to admit all of them under its shelter. The opportunities for prayer and meditation afforded by the unfrequented wood, made the discomforts of their pen-like outer life insignificant. The shed became more than a night's stopping place—it became their abode, until the peasant owner drove them out. Francis found the seclusion of the wood congenial. His indecision, whether to withdraw to a purely contemplative form of life, is said to have been ended by St. Clare. She was a gentlewoman of Assisi, who in 1212, at the age of eighteen, obtained from Francis permission to adopt the life of poverty. She became the director of the woman's side of the movement, and from a convert, became the wise and faithful counsellor of Francis. At times of crisis, when he was in doubt what step to take, she pointed out the right direction. In the matter of the contemplative life, she seems to have shown him that his true vocation was the mixed life of prayer and preaching with which he had started his work.

Expelled from the roadside shed, Francis went with his friends to the hospitable Chapel of Portiuncula, the spot where he had been chosen by the Master. An increased number of followers made his position embarrassing; it had not been so when he was a solitary penitent at the little altar.[3] The Portiuncula Chapel belonged to some Benedictine monks upon the mountain side above Assisi. Francis and his band could not take "squatters'" possession. He had asked the Bishop of Assisi for a Chapel where he might congregate with his friends, and had been refused. A similar request made to the Benedictine Abbot was more fortunate.

[3] The Chapel is only ten feet long.

Digitized by Google

The little Chapel of Portiuncula, with its holy memory, was given to Francis to continue his. More shelters of boughs were constructed, and the little band thus had its permanent home. About the same time it took its permanent name. The first companions spoke of themselves, when questioned, as "penitents of Assisi." The name "Friars Minor" was given in this way:—In a civil dissension at Assisi, Francis had taken the part of the poor (*minores*). That word, *minores,* stands as one of the injunctions Francis had given his followers—they were always to take subordinate and inferior positions, not positions of authority. The re-reading of this injunction impressed upon Francis that the word, *minor* (inferior, poor, weak), expressed what his followers wished to aim for. He therefore declared that his company should call itself the Friars Minor.

The word Mendicant, as used to describe the Dominican and Franciscan Orders, is meant more to distinguish them from the older, self-supporting agricultural Orders, such as the Benedictine and Cistercian, rather than to denote a company of idlers. The Dominican and Franciscan are urban Orders—they early established themselves in the university towns. They had not the means of self-sustenance for a large community afforded by the various industries of a great agricultural establishment. Francis and his friends worked in the fields with the harvesters, and accepted sustenance from those whom they helped. Later the Franciscans became great scholars, like the Dominicans, but that was no part of Francis's ideal for them. The large cities, which contained the universities, were selected as fields for Franciscan labour, originally, because of the numerous population of poor who needed to be evangelized. The Dominicans, on the contrary, chose the university centres because the Order of Preachers, from its very beginning, aimed to combat intellectual errors by the exposition of truth.

The visit to Rome in 1210 had won from the Pope permission to continue what had been begun—the preaching of penance. In the longer Rule which Francis wrote in 1221, he has drawn up a short sermon suitable for his brethren to use "whenever they please, and whatever persons they may be." It is as follows: "Fear, honour, praise, and bless God. Give thanks and adore the Lord God Almighty in Trinity and Unity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Creator of all things. Repent and bring forth worthy fruits of penance, for know that we must soon die. Give, and it shall be given unto you; forgive, and you shall be forgiven; and if you do not forgive, the Lord will not forgive your sins. Blessed are they who shall die penitent, for they shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but woe to those who die impenitent, for they shall be the children of the devil, whose works they have done, and they shall go into everlasting fire. Beware, and abstain from all sin, and persevere in good to the end."

To us it is incredible that such words as the foregoing should have so touched and won people's hearts. But there is absent from the

Digitized by Google

words as we read them, the fire of the speaker which made them live,—fire kindled at the Master's Heart. Everywhere men came out from the world to join the preachers—for Francis and his companions went evangelizing into many districts of Italy.. The number of friars who came together for a conference in 1219 was five thousand. This growth of the Order brought with it, however, grief and disappointment for Francis. From 1215 onward to his death, he carried on a losing struggle for his ideals, both with his own followers and with the authorities of the Church which he so deeply reverenced.

Francis was so single-hearted and high minded, that he never felt the need of a method different from that used by the Master in calling him. He had responded to the Master's voice, and had tried to carry out the Master's directions. He laid that course before all his converts: "Hear, you who are my sons and my brothers, give ear to my words. Open your hearts and obey the voice of the Son of God. Keep his commandments with all your hearts, and perfectly observe his counsels. Praise him, for he is good, and glorify him by your works." Organization was repellent to him. Until 1220, he struggled against the insistence of those who were urging him to formulate a systematized novitiate, etc. After 1220, until his death, he no longer directed the management of his company. In truth, it was no longer his, as he had given it over entirely to Vicars to direct according to their ideas, though in his heart, he held just as tenaciously to his former ideals for it. Truly Francis had conformed himself to his bride, Poverty. He had thrown from him not only prudence and caution in his prodigal devotion to the Master, but he gave up even the group of converts his preaching had won for the Master.

Much is made in secular histories of the rivalry between the two preaching, mendicant Orders that were founded almost simultaneously. With aims and methods, partly similar and largely diverse, and with a human constituency, it is not surprising that jealousy and rivalry should make themselves manifest between the Dominicans and the Franciscans. And it is not surprising, in view of the narrowness of human sympathy, that an ardent admirer of Francis, like Sabatier, can find so little to admire in St. Dominic and the Preachers. But against this unpleasant picture there is the accredited testimony of Fra Angelico (a Dominican)—his well known painting of the meeting of the two Evangelists and their fraternal salutation. This is thought to have occurred in 1215. Dominic had gone to Rome to secure approval, with a view to widening his efforts. Francis was there to report his successes and needs. They met. And several times afterward their paths crossed.

There are facts and legends which show the complete trust of Francis in the Master's guidance, and his distrust of book-learning. In 1219, Francis returned from a missionary enterprise among the Moslems. His absence from Italy had continued only a year, but

Digitized by Google

advantage had been taken of it to do many things against his wish,—prohibition of meat, etc. Stopping at Bologna, a great university centre, he found members of his Order constructing a building, some authorities say a monastery, others, a school. Whether monastery or school, such a structure was in violation of the rule to own and possess nothing, and also in violation of Francis's wish that his preachers should study only the Master's will. He had the incompleted building pulled down. A few years later, when Francis had surrendered all direction of his family, an incident occurred which illustrates very clearly his feeling about this matter. "One day a novice who could read the psalter, though not without difficulty, obtained from the minister-general—that is to say, from the vicar of St. Francis—permission to have one. But as he had learned that St. Francis desired the brethren to be covetous neither of learning nor of books, he would not take his psalter without his consent. So, St. Francis having come to the monastery where the novice was, 'Father,' said he, 'it would be a great consolation to have a psalter; but though the minister-general has authorized me to get it, I would not have it unknown to you.' 'Look at the Emperor Charles,' replied St. Francis with fire, 'Roland, and Oliver and all the paladins, valorous heroes and gallant knights, who gained their famous victories in fighting infidels, in toiling and labouring even unto death! The holy martyrs, they also have chosen to die in the midst of battle for the faith of Christ! But now there are many of those who aspire to merit honour and glory, simply by relating their feats. Yes, among us also there are many who expect to receive glory and honour by reciting and preaching the works of the saints, as if they had done them themselves!'

" . . A few days after, St. Francis was sitting before the fire, and the novice drew near to speak to him about his psalter.

" 'When you have your psalter,' said Francis to him, 'you will want a breviary, and when you have a breviary you will seat yourself in a pulpit like a great prelate and will beckon to your companion,—Bring me my breviary!'

"St. Francis said this with great vivacity, then taking up some ashes he scattered them over the head of the novice, repeating, 'There is the breviary, there is the breviary!'

"Several days after, St. Francis being at Portiuncula and walking up and down on the roadside not far from his cell, the same brother came again to speak to him about his psalter. 'Very well, go on,' said Francis to him, 'you have only to do what your minister tells you.' At these words the novice went away, but Francis began to reflect on what he had said, and suddenly calling to the friar, he cried, 'Wait for me! wait for me!' When he had caught up to him, 'Retrace your steps a little way, I beg you,' he said. 'Where was I when I told you to do whatever your minister told you as to the psalter?' Then falling upon his knees on the spot pointed out by the friar, he prostrated himself at

Digitized by Google

his feet: 'Pardon, my brother, pardon!' he cried, 'for he who would be a Brother Minor ought to have nothing but his clothing.' "

The last six years of Francis's life contained intense joy for they are marked by two noteworthy incidents, the Stigmata, in 1224, and a year later, the Canticle of the Sun.

With certain types of saints, the Stigmata mark a stage of discipleship. Those whose aspiration leads them to mould themselves after Christ's pattern, must all inevitably, at some time share with Him something of His passion. Many who have passed through that experience, prayed that the marks of the wounds on their bodies might be concealed. In Francis's case they were distinctly visible. He reached this new stage of communion after a long retreat for prayer on La Verna (or Monte Alverno), a wooded summit belonging to a friendly nobleman.

Two or three friends accompanied Francis to this seclusion, but did not intrude upon his solitude. As the event is given, in narratives and paintings, a "seraph" came to Francis at sunrise, nailed to a Cross. When the "seraph" departed the wounds had been imprinted upon Francis' body.

From La Verna, by a slow journey, Francis went to St. Damian's, his first holy spot, which had become the abode of St. Clare and her nuns. Francis was practically blind, and he felt that his end was approaching. He made a long sojourn with this friend in the sanctuary where the Master had first spoken to him. He seems to have passed through a period of depression that gradually cleared and ended in the Song of Praise commonly known as the Canticle of the Sun. This song, composed in Italian, and many times translated, is one of the world's literary classics.

> "O most high, almighty, good Lord God, to thee belong praise, glory, honour, and all blessing!
>
> Praised be my Lord God with all his creatures, and specially our brother the sun, who brings us the day and who brings us the light; fair is he and shines with a very great splendour: O Lord, he signifies to us thee!
>
> Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon, and for the stars, the which he has set clear and lovely in heaven.
>
> Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind, and for air and cloud, calm and all weather by the which thou upholdest life in all creatures.
>
> Praised be my Lord for our sister water, who is very serviceable unto us and humble and precious and clean.
>
> Praised be my Lord for our brother fire, through whom thou givest us light in the darkness; and he is bright and pleasant and very mighty and strong.
>
> Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth, the which doth

Digitized by Google

sustain us and keep us, and bringeth forth divers fruits and flowers of many colours, and grass.

Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for his love's sake, and who endure weakness and tribulation; blessed are they who peaceably shall endure, for thou, O most Highest, shalt give them a crown.

Praised be my Lord for our sister, the death of the body, from which no man escapeth. Woe to him who dieth in mortal sin! Blessed are they who are found walking by thy most holy will, for the second death shall have no power to do them harm.

Praise ye and bless the Lord, and give thanks unto him and serve him with great humility."

His depression passed away in the singing of this Canticle, and radiant happiness again filled his heart. He directed his friars to pass through the towns singing it, as *jongleurs de Dieu* (God's troubadours) and to ask of their auditors in payment, *repentance.*

Francis's naïve and poetic disposition gave the world one of its most popular forms of worship. His desire to venerate the infant Jesus in the mean surroundings of His birth, led him to make a rude reproduction of the stable at Bethlehem. The world has approved his judgment, and the familiar manger of Christmastide is his perpetual souvenir.

Francis died in 1226, at the Portiuncula Chapel,—his home. Before his death, he had his bare body placed on the uncovered earth as a symbol to his brethren of the Poverty he had taken for bride. The great prodigal who had started life all for self, died,—still a prodigal, but all for Christ. Utter self-forgetfulness in love of Christ, simplicity and charm as of a little child—this is what wins him the hearts of religious as well as the admiration of the world.

C. C. CLARK.

If we would see the stars of His mysteries, we must first descend into the deep well of humility.—ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA.

Digitized by Google

SAWS—BENT AND OTHERWISE

KITTREDGE broke the momentary silence with a laugh; adding, "Well, you fellows will have to admit, after all, the effect of the old saw, 'It is the exception that proves the rule,' so, perhaps, I'm right after all."

Darlwright made a gesture of impatience, using it to knock the ash off his cigarette. "There you go, misusing a truism to try to establish a fallacy. The misuse of that quotation always enrages me."

"How 'misuse'—doesn't it clearly let me out?"

"It does seem pat," commented Packham.

"Only because our modern generation has forgotten the real sense of the word 'prove.' If it be used correctly, the proverb is nicely exact—and keeps Kittredge in the hole he got into."

"How would you use it?" came Kittredge's challenge.

"Wait a minute," broke in Packham, "let's leave it to the court of final resort. What does the dictionary say?" He crossed the room and took down a volume.

"Well?" asked Darlwright.

"By Jove, Kittredge, he's right—listen to this: 'To try by experiment, or by test or standard; test; make trial of.' No; here's your meaning: 'To render certain; put out of doubt (as a proposition)'—but, that's the second meaning. It goes back to the Latin *probare*—'test, try, examine, approve, show to be good or fit, prove,' from *probus*, 'good, excellent.' Let's see—the Anglo-Saxon *profian* meant 'test, try, prove'—there's a point for you, Darlwright, and, if we go back to 'proof,' there's still more weight for you."

"I learned that, as a small boy, asking what the Army 'proving-ground' at Sandy Hook meant," explained Darlwright.

"The dictionary has 'proving-ground'—'a ground or place used for firing proof charges in cannon, for testing powder, and for making ballistic experiments.'"

"But, I still don't see why I can't use that second meaning of 'prove'; which makes the proverb work my way?" This from Kittredge.

"Substitute the word 'test'—the first meaning—and see what simple common sense, and sound wisdom, there is in the saw: 'It is the exception that tests the rule.' How can a rule be 'rendered certain,' be 'put out of doubt,' by an exception? It is obedience to a rule that does that; not an exception from it."

"Unless something happens, as a result of the exception, that shows that it would have been better to have followed the rule in the first place," said Packham, as he closed the dictionary, and went back to his chair.

"But that wasn't what I meant," confessed Kittredge, "and it is not what most people mean when they quote it. Think of the whole system

Digitized by Google

of modern philosophy that has been built up on the putting of the second meaning to that word 'prove.' I can see that Darlwright is right about that proverb—though you are usually wrong, Darlwright! I wonder if there are any other saws or proverbs that we twist, nowadays, to fit into our views, rather than holding to what the original epigrammist really meant."

"Do epigrammists ever really mean anything, except trying to be super-clever?" asked Packham.

Kittredge ignored this: "I can think of one. Everybody says: 'Money is the root of all evil'—which is nonsense. The original is: 'The love of money is the root of all evil' and that makes sense; besides being good occultism. What a difference it would make, if people only realized the difference."

"There's an old saying: 'You find what you look for.' The kind of people there are, nowadays, want a material standard for everything. They would simply say—'Why, everybody loves money'—and believe it, however untrue it is; so they would say that it could not be 'love of money,' because—'we are good.'" Darlwright stopped for an instant, just long enough for Kittredge to cut in with: "Doesn't 'evil to him who evil thinks' cover that? Won't a given civilization find in its saws and proverbs what it wants to?"

"Yet," protested Darlwright, "that doesn't justify a distortion of a truth, handed down from the ages, for that is all that a proverb or maxim really is."

"Which reminds me," said Packham, "of something that Mr. Judge once wrote. As I recall it, it was: 'The antiquity which survives is of interest not from its age but for its truth.' Ought there not to be a Court of Interpretation of Saws, Maxims and Proverbs, to prevent their misuse, for what is more dangerous than the misuse or misapplication of the truth?"

"Haven't we got that 'Court' now in the T.S., with the sayings and writings in all the world's scriptures and teachings—Egyptian, Chinese, Hindu, Greek, Buddhist, and Christian, to say nothing of the Guatemalan and others less accessible—and, for us in the West especially, Plato and his school, the Lord Jesus and his disciples, the Lord Krishna and his fighters, the Lord Siddartha and his chêlas, the Master K.H., Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge, and their associates, to furnish a 'body of the law,' with 'leading cases' and 'ruling precedents'?" was Kittredge's suggestion.

"Be careful where you are going, Kit; remember 'Look before you leap'; you talk as if you believed that it is possible to find crystallized dogma and doctrine in the T.S.," was Darlwright's warning, "and that, we all know, is absolutely impossible. 'There aint no sich animal.'"

"Of course there isn't. I know perfectly well that there is no T.S. dogma or doctrine. It wouldn't be the T.S. if there were. That is just why I used the phraseology of the Common Law practice, where everything is fluid and adaptable, or should be! as against Code Law, which

Digitized by Google

attempts to establish unbending dogma and unchanging doctrine. But I interrupted you, Packham. What is it that you are so palpably suffering to say?"

"It was about the danger of misusing and misapplying the truth. That is what is so very discouraging to me in our current, so-called civilization—it either utterly ignores the truths that are antique, or blandly misapplies them."

"For instance?" Kittredge queried.

"Well, take our attitude towards 'repentance.' There are people urging that we hold out the right hand of fellowship to the fouled and bloody hands of the Hun and his partners. They even dare to cite Christ as authority for such forgiveness. They say that he said that we should forgive our brother—and all men have been made brothers by the writing of the Treaty for the League of Nations! Christ did say that we must forgive our brother, even if he offend us 'seventy times seven,' but he also, and most unqualifiedly and unequivocally, limited such forgiveness to repentant sinners. I remember having heard it said once, at a T.S. Branch meeting, by one of the speakers, that the Greek word, from which we get 'repentance,' really meant 'heart-turning.' Have the Germans shown any signs of 'heart-turning'?

"Did I ever tell you of that sermon I heard preached by the Reverend John McGann of Christ's Church, Springfield, Massachusetts? He took for his text the Second Word on the Cross—'This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' Mr. McGann said that an estimable lady in his congregation had asked him to go to the county jail to see a 'repentant thief,' who had been given a two-years' sentence. He said that he went and found a very much inconvenienced thief, ready to say or to promise anything to get out of jail. Mr. McGann closed with pointing out that, while our Lord promised Paradise that day to the really repentant thief, he did not use his power to take the thief down from the cross and heal his sore and wounded body. And a truly repentant sinner, the Rector suggested, undoubtedly would prefer to work out his salvation on the cross, as a result of his real repentance.

"Have you seen any signs of the Germans being ready to stay on their cross? They are, unquestionably, horribly inconvenienced, but, so far, what single sign by the German people has there been of repentance? Dare we, as Christians, venture to forgive them, until they have complied with our Lord's mandate that repentance shall precede and earn forgiveness?"

Kittredge and Darlwright shook their heads in acquiescence. There was a period of that intimate silence of congenial smokers. As usual it was Kittredge who broke it, saying, "Do you remember that other time at a Branch meeting, when the comment was made on the word 'rich?' It was said by one of the speakers, as I recall, the same one who defined 'repentance,' that, in King James' day, 'rich' had a very different meaning

Digitized by Google

from that which it has today—more nearly like our modern use of the word 'arrogant,' or, perhaps, 'purse-proud'."

Packham crossed over to his Concordance and began to look up the word. "I should say," he remarked, "that it was used in a variety of ways; yet there seems to have been sometimes a connotation of consciousness of possessions, that savours of your interpretation."

Kittredge said: "Thank you. Let us take the phrase 'rich young ruler'—would it not have been tautological if that 'rich' had meant 'wealthy in the world's goods,' to which our modern ideas limit it? Though, now that I think of it, we do keep the old sense of 'rich,' when we speak of colours and of tones, preserving the old note that suggests arrogance.

"The Master, who said—'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's'; the Master who steadfastly refused to set materialistic standards, to degrade his mission to a worldly base, even to prevent his own sufferings, even to save his own life, could never have meant to exclude men from heaven merely and solely because they had money. Wasn't it wholly attitude and life that counted with him? An arrogant man, with or without money, would certainly have trouble getting into heaven. Even in the great drama of Dives and Lazarus, was our Lord not condemning the abuse of position, rather than condemning position itself?

"Think of the tragedy that attends the misunderstanding of that single word! Here are millions and millions of well-meaning men and women in this country, and in all the English-speaking lands, backing and supporting Jewish Socialism—and actually calling it 'Christian'—because they have been led to believe that our Lord used the modern yardstick of dollars-and-cents. Could there be a more horrible travesty on all that he taught? Of course it is hard, when one is too comfortable physically, to be good; but, why limit that to millionaires? Are over-paid, slack-working labouring men any more virtuous, any more Christian, with their recently increased material comforts?

"It really seems to me that we are facing a rather hopeless situation, when Episcopalian, Roman Catholic and Methodist Bishops vie with one another in urging that the lines of salvation be determined by the number of dollars one possesses or lacks; that capital is, *per se,* wicked and labour miraculously right, and entitled to take all and render or give nothing. And this is done in the name of Christianity! There is little teaching to-day of the fundamental, Christ-taught standards of intentions, efforts, aspirations, the performances of individual duties and the power of personal self-sacrifice. It would seem as if no one stops to think that, perhaps, a man who has millions may be good, or that a man who belongs to a labour union may possibly be bad. We seem to have forgotten that our Lord located the Kingdom of Heaven in the heart. Are we not back with the Pharisees, calling upon the Messiah to set up a physical and material kingdom, where all men shall enjoy physical comforts and material preferences? The doctrine of taking up the Cross has appar-

Digitized by Google

ently been forgotten. Did not one of the leaders of the railroad workers recently say that the time had come when labour wanted more of 'the fine things of life'? And then he went on to define them in purely physical terms—in German, yes, and Pharisee-fashion, as material comforts."

"And another, quite simply, said that an automobile, and a good automobile at that, had become a necessity," said Packham.

"I wonder," said Darlwright, musingly, "if reincarnation may not explain the extraordinary anomaly that the world is dominated to-day by materialistic Jews, talking what you, Kittredge, termed 'Pharisee-fashion' —German, Bolshevist, Labour Union, Humanitarian, Socialist, all alike, all the real rulers are of the selfish, materialistic class of Jews, however veneered they may be, and mostly of German Jewish extraction at that. The finer qualities of the race seem to have been smothered in the atmosphere of Hunland. Perhaps the German current, so-to-speak, has permitted a reincarnation of the egos which animated the bodies of those Jews who forced Rome to let the King be crucified, crying 'Crucify him,' as they are to-day crying that the world shall crucify all that he taught, as to each man's responsibility for what he, himself, is and does, rather than the assumption of authority to make the other man perform his own duties."

"That might be a hopeful sign. You remember the predictions through St. John the Divine."

"Let us certainly hope so—I'm beginning to feel that 'Hope long deferred maketh the heart sick,'" was Packham's vigorously given comment.

"Another saw that, I firmly believe, is bent and twisted in its modern use," declared Kittredge. "You used it, just as most of us do, just as if it said—'The fulfilment of hope long deferred maketh the heart sick.' We are tainted with the spirit of the outer world, as it is to-day, when we mean that. That is materialism, pure and undefiled! If that emphasis on the primary concept of fulfilment were true, do you think that our Great Captain could have kept up his fight these nineteen centuries and more, against the activities of the Devil and his cohorts, and the beastly, soggy negativeness of most of the world? Isn't it his flaming, loving hope, in spite of non-fulfilment, that has kept his cause alive and fighting?"

"That's a new point of view to me," came from Packham.

"And to me," added Darlwright, "yet I think it has validity, Kittredge, for, after all, it is rank materialism to say that, if one can't have the result he wants, he must not be blamed if he gets discouraged."

"Can't we see," resumed Kittredge, "that this was the distinguishing difference between the French and the Germans during the war; between the spiritual and materialistic powers? The French were inspired to hope on, with no material foundation for hoping, except their spiritual hope in their cause; in the Master who inspired the cry—*'Ils ne passeront pas'*; in the Maid, whom they believed to counsel their fighters, from

Digitized by Google

Generalissimo to *poilu*. It was not faith, that blind, Anglo-Saxon, obstinate, never-say-die-but-cling-to-the-end faith—it was hope, radiant, flaming hope, buoyant, joyous hope. Had it not been for such hope, the war would indeed have made the heart of France sick.

"In fact, don't you think it is fair to say that, if there be sickness in France to-day, it is due to the premature fulfilment of the hope of beating the Hun, resulting from our essentially non-hopeful President's single-handed and separated, premature negotiations, that led to that futile, foolish, peace-without-victory Armistice, so wildly welcomed in our purblind land? And yet we Americans still feel proud after that, and after our shameful years of fat neutrality, and our utter lack of preparedness. Worst of all—that is, almost worst of all, for, I suppose, in the ledgers of heaven, the biggest charge against us is our neutrality—worst of all is the fact that we seem to have learned absolutely nothing—we are calmly and sweetly letting the great, secret Teutonic Order of Blackness reorganize militant Hunland and demoralize pacifist America. A good authority tells me that German influences and propaganda, especially in labour union circles, were never so strong, active, and effective, even in the palmiest days of von Bernstorff, as they are to-day, and right in Washington, too."

"What would you say to the use of another old saw: 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb'?" asked Packham.

"Isn't that still another case of popular blindness to truth? Don't people forget the emphasis that should be placed on that word 'shorn'? I suppose it is because so very few of us have any first-hand knowledge of sheep-raising. A lamb is 'shorn,' whether it likes it or not, by an outside, stronger, and arbitrary power. The shorn lamb is a non-consenting victim to the shearer. It does not seek, desire or enjoy the shearing. Yet people will quote that proverb just as if it meant that God could spare a man from the inevitable consequences of his own folly or his own misdeeds. If it read: 'God guards the innocent victim of another's act,' it would be true; but, used the way that most people mean it—why, honestly now, don't you think it is arrant nonsense and that there is much more truth in: 'God hates a fool'?"

"Since we are talking of changes in counsel down the centuries, is it fair not to remember that America started with a vital fallacy of that sort? Mr. Eliot Goodwin, in his researches into the influences upon the founders of our republic, discovered that Jefferson had made a radical and far-reaching change, in restating a bit of Montesquieu's compacted wisdom. Goodwin found that that great Frenchman might justly be called the grandfather of America. Montesquieu wrote that 'Man is entitled to life, liberty, and the protection of property';—bully good common sense and a creed any nation could well afford to adopt, for there is nothing in it incompatible with individual responsibility for one's own acts and for the performance of one's own duties. Jefferson, perhaps the most unsound thinker that America has produced, and so

Digitized by Google

characteristically typical of present day thought that it is not unfair to regard him as the protagonist and exemplar of what is upsetting the nation to-day—Jefferson loved the sound of words and the reactions from phantasy. He rarely stopped to count the consequences of his words and acts. That called for creative imagination, which he lacked and which Burke and Hamilton possessed. It caught his fancy to revolt from Montesquieu's sublime common sense and to write into the Declaration of Independence—'Man is entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' which sounds well, means nothing, and which began in America the chasing of rainbows, without regard to the facts of life or the laws of the universe. Is it not easy to see that a people so nurtured on sound and phantasy is not wholly blameable for not thinking straight, and for falling easy victims to the fine words in which Jewish Socialism is being dressed for American consumption?" Darlwright stopped, either because he was through or else to light his cigarette.

Packham, it was, who this time broke in, saying: "That makes Jefferson a psychic. That would explain the mystery of his going back on all his convictions and annexing Louisiana, when Napoleon gave him the chance, although it went against Jefferson's own rulings as to constitutional limitations and against his own record. But, after all, psychics have no real convictions."

"Unless their blind faith in themselves and their momentary wisdom, however often they may change sides, may be a conviction," was Darlwright's addition.

"And I am led to wonder if Jefferson was the last great psychic to lead American thought, or to try to," came from Kittredge's corner.

"In spite of your explanation, Darlwright, don't you think it is rather strange that a people who are fast changing the old national motto —'In God we trust,' into 'Safety first,' should blunder along as we do in the face of the Hun menace?" asked Packham.

"Isn't that simply because we don't know what is the real 'safety'?"

"No— I think it is basic," broke in Kittredge, getting up and walking up and down. "We mean it. We have become so materialistic that we measure everything in terms of physical comfort. The Socialists are perfectly logical in their attitude towards war. They were even logical and consistent in their unfailing support of Germany during the war and since. Any set of people who want to take by force from one man to help out another man, who has proved his own unwillingness to help himself, naturally sides with the invaders of Belgium. It is all a question of using force to deprive another of his rights. More than that—to the true worshipper of 'Safety first,' it would be better to let Germany seize America, and rule us, than to sacrifice a single life or limb in fighting for independence, self-respect, and decency."

"Wouldn't it be worth while to start a national organization to preach and to teach where the real safety lies—in the old motto: 'In God

Digitized by Google

we trust'?" Packham spoke with more seriousness than any of them had heretofore shown.

Kittredge stopped in front of the smaller bookcase. "Where's your *Occult World?*" he asked.

"On the top shelf, at your left," called over Packham. Kittredge took down a book and ran over its pages.

"Here's your answer," he said, "and answered by one of the wise, that wonderful and loving teacher and helper, the Master K. H. Don't you remember this?" and he read:

" 'Such is unfortunately the inherited and self-acquired grossness of the Western mind, and so greatly have the very phrases expressive of modern thought been developed in the line of practical materialism, that it is now next to impossible, either for them to comprehend or for us to express in their own language anything of that delicate, seemingly ideal, machinery of the occult kosmos. To some little extent that faculty can be acquired by the Europeans through study and meditation, but—that's all.'

"And though Americans are Europeans, in the sense in which the Master K.H. used the classification, how many really study, and how many would be ready to meditate on any problem, even if it did involve their souls' salvation?" Kittredge fairly shot this over his shoulder. Then he resumed reading:

" 'And here is the bar which has hitherto prevented a conviction of the theosophical truths from gaining currency among Western nations—caused theosophical study to be cast aside as useless and fantastic by Western philosophers. How shall I teach you to read and write, or even comprehend a language of which no alphabet palpable or words audible to you have yet been invented?' " Kittredge looked up and said: "And don't you remember that hint of our great Western Master, when he was 'allowed to go among the herd of men as their redeemer'; that saying that is to me one of the very saddest in the Gospels—'And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.' One did rise from the dead, and have men yet been 'persuaded'? And the line of prophets did not stop with John the Baptist, but has continued on, down to this very day. If such work has failed, do you think that any exoteric organization, however great, could succeed? But here is something even more conclusive, I think." Turning over the pages, Kittredge began to read again:

" 'Thus, because they cannot with one leap over the boundary walls, attain to the pinnacles of Eternity—because *we* cannot take a savage from the centre of Africa and make him comprehend at once the *Principia* of Newton or the *Sociology* of Herbert Spencer, or make an unlettered child write a new *Iliad* in old Achaian Greek, or an ordinary painter depict scenes in Saturn, or sketch the inhabitants of Arcturus—*because of all this our very existence is denied.* Yes, for this reason are believers in us pronounced impostors and fools, and the very science which leads to

Digitized by Google

the highest goal of the highest knowledge, to the real tasting of the Tree of Life and Wisdom—is scouted as a wild flight of imagination.'"

Kittredge put back the book and said: "That was written, remember, in the very early eighties. Is it not true to-day? A world which still rejects the Living Christ, cannot be expected to understand, or to be able to understand, where real 'safety' lies. You would be using 'old Achaian Greek,' indeed, if you tried to preach and teach generally, that is, to the mass of men, against the great ground swell of the present tide of ignorance, selfishness, sloth, and materialism that is sweeping over the world."

"You are talking like a man who has lost hope, Kittredge. That is not like you!" Packham showed his surprise.

"Thank God, I have neither faith nor hope in any materialistic measures. Yet I do hope and hope confidently for the coming of his kingdom—and I dare hope because of two saws that, I believe, I use correctly."

"And those are?" asked Darlwright.

"The first is: 'The kingdom of heaven is taken by violence.' My theosophical studies have taught me that this means violence, by me, to my own lower nature, which must be overcome, and never means and never meant, any kind of violence to my neighbour—'nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.' As I do such violence to the enemy in my part of the fighting line, and as others do it on their parts—for no man works alone, for good or for ill—then, under the leadership, guidance and teaching of our Master, victory will surely come. So I see that what seems so utterly hopeless in the outer world, may only be the releasing of pressure, that will yet drive men to turn from futile, popular legislation and 'necessary automobiles' to Christ's commandments and the spiritual comforts."

Packham spoke: "But you said you used two saws—what's the second?"

"'Great oaks from little acorns grow.' As long as the T.S., and its Branches, live and work, there is no need to lose hope for the world. Our 'little acorns' were picked from that 'Tree of Life and Wisdom' by the Masters themselves—at least that is my firm belief, which I know you share. The Masters have planted the seed. They know the soil. They plant not in vain. The work of Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge, and their associates, must inevitably bear fruit. Indeed we should be hopeful, for have we not seen with our eyes and heard with our ears the Message they have brought?"

ROBERT PACKHAM.

To smile in your brother's face is alms.—SAYING OF MOHAMMED.

Digitized by Google

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN the widespread confusion of the present day, and the general bewilderment as to causes or remedy for that confusion, it is refreshing to find such a statement as the following from a recent lecture by Mr. Alfred Noyes:

"To-day the real truth is called 'commonplace' or 'platitude,' but it is still the property of a very small minority. . . . The real rebel, the follower of the real truth, will be found obeying, or trying to obey, those laws of life, thought, art, in which there may be no more originality (in the fashionable sense) than in the laws that govern the courses of the sun. Yet, in their service still, to-day as yesterday and forever, we enter into our perfect freedom."

What a congeries of unpopular ideas these lines suggest: turning (presumably away from progress, that slogan of the present) back to ideals and standards of the past; seeing truth and reality in the commonplace; regarding the minority, and a conservative minority at that, as in the right, and sole possessors of the truth; and above all, finding freedom —that guerdon for which all the world is seeking with such lamentable blindness—in service and obedience. Needless to point out the contrast between this view and the general attitude of the time; it is painfully evident in every turn of events, in every page of newspaper or periodical, in the attitude of the workingman on every side—and all too often in the involuntary reaction of our own rebellious minds and ungoverned wills.

There is, of course, the small minority who possess the truth, and who, let us hope, may serve as the three good men in Sodom and Gomorrah; but in general the attitude of the day is well expressed by two paragraphs taken, one from an issue of a Trade Union magazine appearing shortly after the Armistice: "To-day . . . there should be written down . . . a prayer that this great victory of righteous force may not lead us unconsciously into the fatuous belief that men can be and should be compelled to render service to their fellow men"; the other, from a New York commercial sheet, which declares: "The people are 'sovereign,' so far as sovereignty on this earth can go. They may attempt whatever they please, and they must take the consequences." The snake of self given free rein—that is the law of the day, the explanation of all the manifold activities both at home and abroad, included under the term Bolshevism—and the explanation, as well, of the almost universal blindness or indifference to their inevitable result.

Some years ago, the anarchist, Prince Kropotkin, wrote, "What we learn to-day from the study of the Great [French] Revolution is that it was the source and origin of all the present communist, anarchist, and socialist conceptions . . . up till now, modern socialism has added absolutely nothing to the ideas that were circulating among the French

Digitized by Google

people between 1789 and 1794, and which it was tried to put into practice in the year II of the Republic (*i. e.*, in the Reign of Terror)." Granting that this is the case, the French Revolution should afford many parallels to tendencies and events of the present day, and above all should offer illuminating suggestions, at least, as to the consequences that may be expected. Among recent publications, one by Mrs. Arthur Webster entitled *The French Revolution,* published by Constable and Company, London, gives an account written from an unusual and interesting point of view, well suited to bringing out the parallel or relationship between that period and our own. The sub-title of the book is "A Study in Democracy," and the author has undertaken to present her subject not from the revolutionary and not from the monarchist standpoint, but from that of the French people.

"During the last few years," she writes, "the French Revolution has become less a subject for historical research than a theme of the popular journalist who sees in that lurid period material to be written up with profit. This being so, accuracy plays no part in his scheme. . . . If the Revolution is to be regarded as the supreme experiment in democracy, if its principles are to be held up for our admiration and its methods advocated as an example to our own people, is it not time that some effort were made to counteract that 'conspiracy of history' that in France also, as M. Gustave Bord points out, has hitherto concealed the real facts concerning it? Shall we not at least cease from rhapsody" (a reference to Carlyle's work which she quotes Lord Cromer as terming a philosophical rhapsody, inaccurate and prejudiced; well worth reading, but not history) "and consider the matter calmly and scientifically in its effects on the people? This, after all, is the main issue—how was the experiment a success from the people's point of view?" The author consults for her purpose memoirs, journals and other contemporary accounts, of which she has made an exhaustive study, weighing the evidence on both sides, taking into account the personal bias or political sympathies of the writers and endeavoring to give actual facts freed from the many-coloured coat with which they have been overlaid.

The result differs widely and in many respects from the histories with which most of us are familiar. The outstanding feature perhaps is the assertion, well and convincingly substantiated, that the Revolution, far from being an expression of the will of the people, was the outgrowth of a series of intrigues, chief among which was a conspiracy of the Duc d'Orléans and his followers to seize the throne. The theory of a French people groaning under oppression, and forced in their misery to revolt against a cruel tyranny, is shown to be based on misunderstanding. The actual situation called for reform; the people demanded reform, and the King, in sympathy with the very apparent need, met it generously and in a way that won him the loyal support of his subjects. The Orléaniste conspiracy is the thread on which is strung every event of the Revolution. Systematically and cleverly organized,—for the Duke, however un-able

Digitized by Google

himself, had men of very genuine ability in his pay,—it was spread secretly over all France, and accomplished its aims through calumniation of the monarchy, employment of corrupt and base men as its tools, and terrorization of the people. By disseminating lying propaganda, by duping the uneducated classes, by committing atrocities—in many cases the equal of those in the Great War—and attributing them to others, by claiming sinister designs on the part of those victimized, the Orléaniste faction, with diabolical ingenuity, led the French people to work out their own destruction. This conspiracy it was which brought about each of the five great crises of the Revolution, contriving with consummate skill to conceal the real instigators and produce the effect of a spontaneous movement of the people against despotism. This it was which caused the continual vacillation of the mob from wild enthusiasm for the King to outbursts of revolutionary fury,—as the basest and most corrupt means were invariably employed to avert popular satisfaction at each concession made by the monarch.

A correspondingly different view of the King and Queen are given. Honest, benevolent, possessed of great simplicity and sincerity, the King regarded himself as the servant of his people. Again and again a display of force, the firing of a few shots, gave promise of ending the disturbances; but so long as the insurrection was against his own authority, so long as it was his own life at stake, he refused to shed the blood of his subjects; and only after an agony of irresolution could he determine to do so when the people, turning on each other, made it a duty to protect them against themselves. In affairs of state he was blundering, uncertain, short-sighted, and his great misfortune was never to have had, at any of the great crises, disinterested advisers. Added to this, his slow-moving mind could not calculate effects nor play on the emotions of the mob, as his enemies knew so supremely well how to do. His nobility, his goodness, his love for France, would have made him, in a less turbulent period, a greatly loved King. The author's comment on his death is consistently in accord with her view of him throughout: "Of all the men who played their part in the Revolution, there was only one who, realizing that no hope for his life remained, could say from the depths of his heart, as he stood on the threshold of the other world—the platform of the guillotine —'I desire that my blood may seal the happiness of the French.' That one true patriot, that one man ready to die for France and for the people, was the King."

Of the Queen, too—the Marie Antoinette of the years of the Revolution—a different view is given. She is shown to have had many truly queenly qualities, heroic courage and fortitude, dignity, charm, aloofness, and a certain strange power over those about her—a power which the author does not attempt to define, but before which the infuriated rabble more than once fell back abashed. She is represented as genuinely attached to the interests of France, but, while sensible, clever and quick of mind at the very points where the King was slow, she nevertheless

Digitized by Google

possessed none of the qualities of statesmanship, and erred continually through blindness and bewilderment. Her very virtues won her the bitter enmity of a number of the nobility, particularly that of the Duc d'Orléans and his boon companions, and, accordingly, persecutions, infamous libels, and intrigue against the Queen formed no small part of the Orléaniste conspiracy. Her other arch-enemy was the King of Prussia, whose ambitious schemings had been thwarted by her marriage with Louis XVI and the resulting alliance with Austria. And here a whole new network of intrigue is suggested in the machinations of Frederick William through his agent Von der Goltz and others in his employ in Paris. An item is given from the account of the Prussian King for the year 1792—"six million écus for corruptions in France"—money spent for the purpose of embroiling France with Austria, thus overturning the balance of power in Europe; for discrediting and blackening the character of the Queen, as a means to undermine the monarchy in France; for arousing sympathy with Prussia, and in every nefarious way for opening up avenues to the realization of Prussian ambition. Everyone is familiar with the accusations against Marie Antoinette regarding her Austrian sympathies. Mrs. Webster writes: "This, then, was one of the great crimes of the unhappy Queen—that she was anti-Prussian. Those amongst the French who still revile her memory would do well to remember that she was the first and greatest obstacle to those dreams of European domination that, originating with Frederick the Great, culminated in the aggression of 1870 and 1914."

Many there were, according to the author, who knew the facts, particularly of the Orléaniste conspiracy; and certain men, among whom are mentioned Mounier, Bergasse, Lafayette, might have used their great influence in exposing and righting the situation. They failed to act, we are told, not because they lacked courage, but because they regarded the conspiracy as incidental to the Revolution, "they recognized its existence but failed to recognize its extent, . . . they were visionaries, and at times of national crisis visionaries are of all men the most dangerous; intent on the pursuit of unattainable ideals, they shut their eyes to realities, and instead of facing danger prefer to ignore it." This, it would seem, is one of the fundamental parallels between that period and this: a vast majority of people, well-meaning, perhaps, but indifferent, blind, and too intent on material concerns to be awake to the situation (though for different reasons in each case); and leaders who are visionaries, pursuing unattainable ideals, ignoring danger instead of facing it. In our own day this has been evident on every hand. We have seen it in the attitude toward each step of German infamy and aggression; it was clear in the case of the murder of the Czar and every ensuing feature of the Russian situation; it is equally clear, in the present world crisis, in the way in which we dally with the matter of recognition of the Soviet government, complacently remain "unruffled" toward the defiant action of Labour in the question of war with Russia, or calmly watch Red armies negotiating for German aid, reassuring ourselves with the observation that "the whole

Digitized by Google

mental outlook of Germans of that class is too utterly foreign to that of Bolshevism for anything like real friendship to be possible." On the part of the majority of mankind there is ignorance, indifference, disinclination to act; on the part of their leaders, refusal to face facts, or an attempt to minimize their seriousness,—a continual tendency to avoid the issue, to temporize, to compromise. And what was the result in 1789? Leaders and people alike fell an easy prey to a few unprincipled men filled with "the will to power"; were readily deceived by the subversive doctrines of a handful of malcontents who led them from illusion to delusion, and thence to revolutionary madness. "But does the nation *know* what it wishes?" sneeringly retorted one of the revolutionary leaders in France. "One can make it wish, and one can make it say what it has never thought . . . the nation is a great herd that only thinks of browsing."

To turn to a matter which attracts comparatively little attention: what is being done at the present time to combat the literature of the Bolshevist propagandists or of the equally subversive "intellectual radicals"? In a recent issue of the *Atlantic Monthly,* an article by J. Salwyn Schapiro makes the statement: "A phenomenon new to America is the growing sympathy among men and women of education, with the ideals and methods of the revolutionary proletariat. . . . What is taking place in America now—something with which Europe has long been familiar—is the formation of an intellectual *class,* revolutionary in tendency and bound together by a common antipathy for the present order of things." He refers also to a tradition established at the time of the French Revolution, that writers, teachers, artists, and scientists can exercise power in society, provided it is used on the side opposed to the *status quo.* Even a casual glance at radical periodicals will offer endless illustrations of the work of this type of writer—men and women bent on "exercising power in society," carried away with the idea of self-expression, and in every case convinced that a new life, a new world, lies open to them if only the existing order can be destroyed. (We all know the counterpart of this in ourselves: which of us has not had the conviction at one time or another that he could really live pretty well up to his ideal if only this or that hindrance, obstacle, or interfering circumstance could be removed!) Given free rein, what is the significance of these subversive doctrines? To what do they lead?

We are told that in the France of 1790 the philosophers—the noted reformers, Rousseau and Diderot, for example—had comparatively little effect on any but the aristocracy and the educated bourgeoisie. The common people, the peasant tilling the soil, were too intent on their crops, or on other immediate interests, to be influenced by them. But there were a host of pamphleteers, journalists, subversives of all sorts, "intellectual radicals" like the coterie of Madame Roland, who reached all classes with the contagion of their seditious doctrines, and who worked endless harm. "To make the people happy," wrote one of them, "their ideas must be reconstructed, laws must be changed, morals must be changed, men must

Digitized by Google

be changed, things must be changed, *everything, yes, everything must be destroyed,* since everything must be re-made." In passing, it may be added that the writer of these high-flown phrases lived to see them realized in all their horror. His wife became a suicide from despair, and he himself a victim of the guillotine. France, too, had her parlour Bolshevists, people who dabbled over dinner tables in revolutionary doctrines, and outdid the revolutionists themselves in the ardour of their laudation of each excess.

In our own day there is a more or less general feeling that one is rather hysterical to take these misguided people too seriously; they have a right to their opinions, it is said, and, after all, what more does it amount to than a form of "self-expression," extreme, yes, but harmless. On this point of self-expression, there is a pertinent line from Professor Babbitt's *Rousseau and Romanticism:* "A man may safely go into himself if what he finds there is not, like Rousseau, his own emotions, but, like Buddha, the law of righteousness." In Mrs. Webster's history there is an opportunity to see the poison of the "harmless" theories taking its insidious effect, and to trace it in its far-reaching results. And the author offers in comment: "Is not the instigator of a crime infinitely more criminal than the wretched instrument who commits it? And were not the orators and writers—Marat, Danton, Desmoulins, Brissot, Carra, Madame Roland—more truly the authors of these excesses than the crazed and drunken populace who put their precepts into practice? For the cannibals of the Tuileries, the horrible women of the Paris Faubourgs plunging their knives into the bodies of their victims, had not evolved such deeds from their own inner consciousness."

De Tocqueville, in his study of pre-Revolutionary France, comments on the influence of the writers who inspired and developed the revolutionary ideals, and asserts that the government should have *employed* them, thus having them under some degree of control. Profiting by the suggestion, whether knowingly or otherwise, Germany, as was characteristic of her, kept her revolutionary writers under direct control and supervision, with the natural result that such form of expression did not flourish in that country. What our own country might or might not do in the way of prevention or of counter-propaganda is not to the point, here. The chief point is, what can we do personally? What are we doing to familiarize ourselves with facts, to take a clear and (so far as possible) intelligent view of events, and above all to control or eliminate in ourselves the subversive element which will otherwise colour and distort every thought, every influence that comes to us? It is a difficult task and one that requires a man's whole attention and effort—to realize that each one of us has a direct causal connection with events, even of world-wide import, and then to do something about it. It is difficult, because so much more is necessary than mere mental assent—indeed, it involves the whole problem of self-mastery; for, without self-mastery, right thinking can never be relied upon to lead to right action.

Point by point, as we read Mrs. Webster's account, the parallel stands

Digitized by Google

out. The specious promises of the revolutionary leaders, the events which led to the establishment of the Republic, the ensuing war on civilization, the plan for world-wide extension, the hideous program of the Reign of Terror, all have their counterpart in the rule of Lenin and Trotzky. Early in the course of events the people saw and repented of their error, but too late, for through the Jacobin Clubs, formed secretly in all sections of the country, every opposition to the central power could be forestalled and visited with hideous penalty. From Arthur Young's contemporary account, *The Example of France,* comes the following: "Doubtless there were French farmers who rejoiced at the spectacle of all the great properties of the kingdom being levelled by the nation; they did not, however, foresee that it would be their own turn next; that the principle of equality being once abroad, would infallibly level *all* property." Mrs. Webster quotes phrases from contemporary documents such as, "day-labourer now enriched with 50,000 livres of income," or, "who arrived in Paris in sabots and now possesses four fine houses" (phrases suggestive of conditions with which we are all familiar). But she writes: "The democrats of 1789 had become the aristocrats of 1792, and it was no longer only the nobles who cursed the Revolution, but the farmers, the manufacturers, and the industrious bourgeois who three years earlier had hailed 'the dawn of liberty,' and now found themselves sharing the fate of the class they had been so eager to dethrone."

Similarly, Mrs. Webster cites a law of 1791 suppressing all coalitions of workmen (annihilation, not suppression, is the actual word used), and forbidding the workmen to "name presidents, keep registers, make resolutions, deliberate or draw up regulations on their pretended common interests," or to determine any fixed scale of wages. A recent book on Bolshevism by John Spargo, *The Greatest Failure in All History,* might well be referring to that same period. It tells of the struggle in Russia between the Soviet government and the trade unions, with the subsequent abolishment of certain unions, denial of the right to strike, arbitrary settlement of wages and working conditions, suppression of all meetings, and the compulsory labour of all citizens, of both sexes, between the ages of sixteen and fifty. The Commissar of Labour is quoted as having placed in a number of industrial concerns special dictators "with unlimited powers and entitled to dispose of the life and death of the workmen." All this in the so-called reign of the proletariat—and facts of this character can be multiplied indefinitely.

It may be objected that such parallels refer only to conditions in far-off Russia. We are inclined to feel so remote, so safe! Much is written in our periodicals to show that such conditions could never exist in our country. The qualities, characteristics and past experience of the Russian peasant are dwelt upon and contrasted with those of the working class elsewhere. The fact that in America there are hundreds of thousands of small landholders, with interests at stake, is shown to be a sure preventive. The tremendous extent of our territory, causing the same class or the

Digitized by Google

same labour group to have diametrically opposing interests in different localities, is regarded as a final safeguard. Yet is not all this rather like drawing the bed covers over one's head, in the belief that if the dark is not seen, there is no dark to be afraid of—especially in the face of recent labour developments in England, and of the I.W.W.'s open expression of adherence to the Soviet and antagonism to its foes, with its recent expulsion of seven thousand members for loading transports with supplies for General Wrangel?

However, be the effect of revolutionary contagion what it may, the most important fact in connection with the French Revolution—far more important than the parallel of tendencies and events—is the lesson that human nature follows the same course both in the past and in the present. The Revolution marked a cyclic culmination of the activity of the same forces that are finding expression to-day. The world over, there is actively at work the leaven of malice, wickedness, and greed — the spirit that regards obedience, service, sacrifice, all that is noble, all that is high, as hateful, as an abomination. Yet, opposed to it, there is the age-old truth: Except a man deny himself and take up his cross daily. Let us remember that every day, every hour, in our minute-to-minute choice, we place ourselves actively on one side or the other. And let us remember, too, that even a little leaven will leaven the whole lump. J. C.

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that we cannot be holy except on the condition of a situation and circumstances in life such as shall suit ourselves. It is one of the first principles of holiness to leave our times and our places, our going out and coming in, our wasted and our goodly heritage entirely with the Lord. Here, O Lord, hast Thou placed us, and we will glorify Thee here.—T. C. UPHAM.

Digitized by Google

THE REALM, THE RADIANCE AND THE POWER*

"Learn now of me, how he who has won the first great victory, shall go forward to the everlasting Power. Here is the perfect rule of wisdom, briefly told:

"Let him hold himself firmly in the ray of the illumined Soul, freeing himself from the tyranny of sensations, and rising above lusts and hate;

"Let him dwell in solitude; let him be sparing of bodily lusts; let him subordinate thought, word, and deed to the Light; let him steadily bring himself under the inspired will; let him overcome self-reference;

"Let him rid himself of these things: conceit, violence, arrogance, sensuality, jealousy, graspiness; then, free from the sense of appropriation, and full of the great peace, he builds with the everlasting Power."—Songs of the Master.

THE perfect rule of wisdom here set forth, holds the answer to the difficulty and perplexity we are facing at this very time: the question what to do next. We have won the first great victory. And now we are waiting, in a kind of quietness and uncertainty, knowing that something has been gained, but not seeing clearly what it is, not able to give any lucid account of it to ourselves; not seeing whither our victory is to lead us. To use an idiom: we cannot see where to take hold: where to catch on.

This is far from being a new difficulty, or à perplexity peculiar to ourselves, or to the present hour. On the contrary, this uncertain and waiting attitude is a quite inevitable and constantly recurring stage on the great path of life; all who have passed along the path, have faced it, just as we are doing; and it is so familiar a friend that its position is marked in all the books of the Mysteries.

We shall make the matter clearer, if we go back a little, and see what our victory consists in. We may put it on record that every stage on the path consists of three parts, and that we have passed two of the three, in the stage we are travelling on. Every stage has three

* Reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum* of March, 1899.

Digitized by Google

divisions: the time of aspiration; the time of illumination; the time of realization. And the moment of perplexity comes after illumination, and before realization—the point where we now stand.

We have all passed through the time of aspiration. We all know how it was with us. First, the time of miserable unrest; of crying for the light, but without in the least knowing what we wanted, or what our malady was. Nothing but a great dissatisfaction; a sense of the meanness of our lives. That was the first stirring of the soul. Then came a stronger longing for the realm, the radiance, and the power: for all the dim glory hidden in our souls. At first the thought of it was cherished as an almost hopeless regret, a sadness for something far beyond our reach. But here, as elsewhere, the appetite grows with eating. And aspiration gradually nursed itself into hope. We knew that the realm and the radiance were real; and we watched for the gleaming of the light that led us on, till hope became fulfilment; till aspiration ripened into illumination.

The full illumination may or may not remain within our conscious memory; but the sense of it is there. We know that the Oversoul has gleamed into our hearts, that we are inwardly open to the immortal sea. We may not know how we know this, nor remember our hour of revelation. But the radiance haunts us; the brooding divinity is there.

That is the second stage. Now comes the third. We have to work that radiant hour into our lives, to realize it in character and in work; to embody our revelation. When we have done this fully, we shall be ready to rise to a new illumination and a new realization; and so the great work goes on. But how to realize our sense of the Soul? That is the problem that brings us the perplexity of waiting. The memory and sense of the Soul haunt us like a shining sea we have seen in dreams, but we cannot find our way back to it; or we are on ice so smooth, that every movement sets us slipping. We can get no grasp on it, no hold, no leverage to move ourselves by. We cannot make our start in life.

The perplexity is a real one. But we overdo it. We never lose a chance of telling ourselves that we are at the end of our powers. That is one of the privileges of sovereign man. But there are ways out of our difficulty.

The first clue is this: it is not really we ourselves who have to find the way; it is not we who have to form the plan, and win the battle. That is already provided for, by the lord of life and death in each of us. The great Life, the everlasting Power, which, like a strong torrent, flows through the channel of our lives, has seen to that. We are not personally responsible for the moving power, for the vital force that is to carry us onwards. A sense of this brings stillness; and, in the stillness, the lord of life and death, the Genius, who really is responsible, will be able to catch our attention, and get his idea into our heads. But we try the patience of the Genius.

Digitized by Google

There are two elements: first, the almighty Power; then, our individual selves. Our work is, to express the Power, through our individual selves. That is what the sage of old meant, by bidding us keep firmly in the ray of the illumined Soul.

Our perplexity is due to this: a new power is to enter our lives, and it is so unlike anything we are familiar with, that it takes us a long time to recognize it; it takes us a long time to become conscious that we have recognized it. Then at last we shall be ready to move forwards.

It is another of man's privileges, to get into mischief of precisely the same kind, a hundred times in succession. This is what happens at this point of progress. We get entangled in the very things that we have just conquered, on our upward path of aspiration. There is a new air about them now, and we get taken in again. The traps that catch us are two, one for each of the inferior worlds, into which we have dropped back after our hour of illumination in the third world, the world at the back of the heavens. The two dear foes are, the lust of sensations, and the conceit of our personal selves. To get rid of the lust of sensation, is like a bath in the ocean, or a long breath of mountain air. To get rid of conceit is like a harassed debtor's sudden release from all financial liabilities. These are the things that stand in the way, and keep us from hearing the voice of the Genius.

It is not sensation that we are to conquer, but the lust of sensation: the preoccupation of our fancies, by memory and desire. Sensation is the earth, quite clean in its due place. The lust of sensation is that same earth afloat in the sea of emotion; the muddy wave of a shallow sea.

The position is this: our souls have a layer of sensation below us; a layer of inspiration above us. We cannot do justice to both at once; we cannot have the sense of both at once. If we are preoccupied with the one, we shall be deaf to the other. But we are here to catch the voice of inspiration. Before we catch it, we must close our ears to the voices of the earth. People fancy they cannot get on without sensation, and that if it ceased for a moment, they would die. They have to learn the contrary. To put this in another way: the perpetual thinking of certain sensations, as dwelling in certain parts of our natural bodies, forms a web which holds the psychic body within the physical body, and prevents its going forth to commune with the Soul. We must forget about our natural bodies for awhile, or we shall remain prisoners, till death tumbles us out into the blue ether.

It is not a question of deadening sensation, and growing rigid. It is rather that we must wash our memories and fancies clean, at least for a while. We are to receive a quite new kind of impression, from a new direction. We cannot be in two places at once. This is the very simple truth which underlies all ascetic ideals. Abstinence, in itself, has not the slightest value, but the stillness that goes with it is needed, if we are to hear the other voice.

Then that dear enemy, who comes back to us as often as recurring

Digitized by Google

springtime: the conceit of our personal selves. It is something like this: we are made of three things,—the animal, the personal, the divine. Our life really streams down from the divine, through the personal life, to be expressed by the animal, in the visible world. For the animal can really express very noble and subtle things, in his looks and works. But the personal part of us, the middle man, labours under the delusion that he is doing it all; and he thinks, moreover, that whatever he wants, must be good for all three. So he exasperates the creative man above him, and makes the animal man do many unwholesome and exciting things, which bring him to an early grave. It is the illusion of very young people, that all half-heard conversation is about themselves; and that all the world is watching them. That part of youth often lasts long; and it is this fatuity which defeats the Genius. The personal man thinks that everything which goes on, is for his benefit; he wants to get a profit from everything, and is continually trying to wrest things in his direction, instead of letting them go clear through, to express themselves in the outer world. What is there in it for me? asks the personal man; and that instinct vitiates all good work. That is what the old sage meant by the sense of appropriation. It is the sin of the middle world. Vanity keeps many a man from hearing the voice of the soul. The vanity of what he fancies his personal self to be, of what he fancies others think of him, and expect of him, keeps many a man from daring to obey the voice of the soul, when he has heard it. And the personal man is an adept at pleading in his own favour. He is a most plausible knave, and very sorry for himself.

We cannot listen to the soul, because we are thinking of our troubles; and vanity is father to most of them. The sage of old has mentioned other things which stand in our light. There is arrogance, the cheerful assurance of superiority, which seems to lighten every man who comes into the world. At least, we all use moral looking-glasses. Then violence, in which nature rebukes us. She makes a noise only when she is destroying. All her building goes on in silence; all the splendid vitality of spring comes forth without the audible stirring of a leaf. She can move a continent, and no one hears a grain of sand fall. Then jealousy, and the rest, that we know as much of as any sage. These things make the noise of our personal selves, which fills our ears, and drowns the voice of the silence.

These are the things that thwart us, when we should be standing in the ray of the illumined Soul. They keep back the stillness, in which the new voice should speak. Every inspiration comes from within and above us; from the Life in the radiance and the realm. The Life speaks to the individual soul, and seeks to be expressed through the work of the individual soul. Now all souls are different. So all expressions of the Life will be different, though inspired by the same Power; just as the same sun brings forth a hundred different flowers, from as many different seeds. Each of us has his seed of genius and power, his

Digitized by Google

individual talent and gift. And the problem is, to let it be quickened by the eternal sunlight.

Here is at once a difficulty, and a delight. The work will be different for each of us; so that no one can really show the way to another. But its fruit will be different for each, so that each of us will have the delight of original creation. We are in the presence of the Power, the Radiance, the Life. The Oversoul is brooding palpably over us, and we feel the haunting presence. But it is all so new, so unprecedented, so strange, that we do not know how to begin, or how to put our hands to the work.

Well, there is plenty of time. Work that is to last forever, need not be hurried. We shall not be taken to task, for making the gods wait. But that splendid presence will haunt us, brooding over our days and nights, until we are carried away by its mighty breath of creative fire, and then we shall know what the lord of life and death was whispering to us through the silence. C. J.

Now understand this well: all those who love themselves so inordinately that they will not serve God save for their own profit and because of their own reward, these separate themselves from God, and dwell in bondage and in their own selfhood; for they seek, and aim at, their own, in all that they do. And therefore with all their prayers and with all their good works, they seek after temporal things, or may be strive after eternal things for their own benefit and for their own profit. These men are bent upon themselves in an inordinate way; and that is why they ever abide alone with themselves, for they lack the true love which would unite them with God and with all His beloved. . .

But from that very hour in which, with God's help, he can overcome his selfhood—that is to say, when he is so detached from himself that he is able to leave in the keeping of God everything of which he has need—behold, through doing this he is so well pleasing to God that God bestows upon him His grace. And, through grace, he feels true love: and love casts out doubt and fear, and fills the man with hope and trust, and thus he becomes a faithful servant, and means and loves God in all he does. Behold, this is the difference between the faithful servant and the hireling.—JOHN OF RUYSBROECK.

Digitized by Google

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

March 22nd, 1916.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

But I cannot feel about the war as you do: I cannot think of it as "a terrible war." The awful element in the war is that which caused it;—the evil of humanity which gradually accumulated during the past;—the past thousand years or the past million years, whichever you like. That evil is the terrible thing, the thing to mourn over, to get emotional about, if you like. But do not permit yourself to do anything but rejoice over the war itself, which is doing so much to clean up this accumulated evil. It is wholly good; and the more suffering it causes, the better it is, so long as human souls have the courage and fortitude to take it in the right spirit, as they are doing in France so splendidly, and in some measure everywhere else.

Your instinctive and automatic attitude against war is just as logical and very similar to the position you might take of thinking very terrible the restrictions on the liberty and self-indulgence of religious in a convent. Indeed, I have no doubt that there are times when the human side of you does almost unconsciously think that the religious have a very hard road to travel, and you pity them and their hardships. But please note that they do not pity themselves, at least those who are any good do not.

We can pity the religious who pities himself, and we can pity the person nowadays who does not understand and whose ignorance causes him to suffer because of the war, but we must not pity him because of the war, or because of the direct suffering it may entail.

We can pity the ignorance that causes this suffering, but the suffering itself is purely remedial, is a blessing sent by the Master, is a gift of grace from on high.

You know all this with part of yourself as well as I do. Why then not make it a part of your daily consciousness, and conquer that emotional element in you which reacts to your environment, and which blinds your real vision of things? I feel sure that you will now do this, in the light of the splendour which France has shown you.

With kind regards, I am, sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

November 19th, 1916.

DEAR ———

About a week ago the *New York Times* printed two extracts from Cardinal Mercier's last pastoral letter, which, we understand, was issued

Digitized by Google

by him about two months ago, was suppressed, and a copy of which only recently reached England and was translated.

Cardinal Mercier is one of the great figures of the world; one who has risen to his responsibilities in a way that makes one's heart glow. Everything we have seen of his, and we have watched for everything he has spoken or written, has been fine, and some of it has been sublime. This last pastoral has the best definition of righteous war that we have seen.

I have often started to write you during these recent months, but there is so much to say that I have shrunk from the task of trying to express any of it.

The superb behaviour of France, the gradually improving condition and behaviour of England, the unutterable selfishness and materialism of this country, which does not seem to us to have one redeeming feature, the progress generally of the fight between the White and the Black Lodge, all these things fill our thoughts hourly and are the mainsprings of our actions. Things are working to a crisis everywhere, and I look soon to see some outer expression of inner facts, which will be of the greatest importance to us all.

With best wishes, I am, Yours sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ———

I was glad to receive your letter of January 3rd, and it was a great pleasure to have your reply in English. . . .

I am glad, too, to learn that you hope soon to found a new Branch at ——, and I hope that your wishes will come true. Please remember, however, that the great Masters who watch over and guide the destiny of the human race, are more anxious about the quality of members than about numbers. Two or three really wise and devoted disciples are worth more than thousands of ordinary members. Mr. Judge used to say that if, as a result of his life's work, he could know when dying that he had brought seven people to the Masters, he would feel that his work had been a success; but of course he meant to bring seven people into conscious discipleship. Only a very few of the thousands who try, ever really succeed from the point of view of this high standard. It is not easy to become a disciple, but it is easy to try; and if we try we are sure to succeed in time.

I trust that you will write to me if you find any difficulty in carrying out the practices I recommended in my first letter, and that you will try very faithfully to do just what was suggested.

I am much obliged to you for your good wishes for the New Year. I also wish you peace and growth and well-being.

Fraternally,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

DEAR ———

It was a pleasure to receive your letter of April 21st, and I am sorry that so long a time has gone by before I replied to it, but I have very many letters to write.

I was interested in what you told me of the priest. I believe that a liberal priest can do more good in the Church, gradually instilling high and noble ideas among his brethren, than by defying his superiors and being excommunicated. There is very much that is good in the Church, which is one of the instruments used by the Lodge, and which never has been abandoned.

I also note what you say about meditation. It is very hard to meditate. Only chêlas can do it perfectly, but as we are trying to become chêlas we must also learn to meditate, and the way to learn is to continue trying. We get more and more light as we go on. The tendency to go to sleep is natural, but it must be fought by making the effort to meditate more positive and virile.

* * * * * * *

Fraternally,
C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ———

Your letter of the third of November reached me in due time, and I want to assure you that you have my most sincere sympathy in the great loss that has come to you. For it is a "loss" when those who are bound to us by the closest ties are taken away from us. We are fortunate in knowing, as so many do not, that the ties of real love hold beyond the change that is called death. Indeed we have so much help in meeting all the trials and the discipline of life, that we may well require of ourselves a stout-hearted acceptance of the lessons sent us, and a courageous determination to find the essence of them. The tone of your letter, in these respects, is very gratifying to me; and I am sure that as you go forward, meeting to the very best of your ability the new duties and obligations that have been laid upon you, help, guidance and consolation will be sent you in generous measure. That is one of the blessings of sorrow, rightly accepted. We are led by it to see that there is help offered us in many ways, help to which we are blindly indifferent when life goes along smoothly for us.

I have been greatly interested in ——, and very much pleased with the character of the articles appearing in this new magazine of yours. We wish you all success with it.

With best wishes to you, and your work for the Cause to which you have dedicated your life, I am,

Fraternally,
C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

DEAR ————

* * * * * * *

I am very sorry to hear of the death of your eldest son. The whole world seems to be full of death and suffering in these days of the great war. It must be good, or it would not be, but it is very hard to understand when the sorrow comes close home to us. I can sympathize with you.

* * * * * * *

Fraternally,
C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ————

I find that I have another letter from you, dated July 21st and announcing the very good news of the formation of your Branch, with its list of officers of so many different nationalities. I wish you every possible success and good fortune. The only advice I can give you is that you should be patient and charitable with each other. You cannot hope always to agree. *Each one of you should remember that the others' way may be just as good as your way; and that it does not matter so much what is done as that your intentions should be good. Try to settle all your differences of opinion in this spirit.*

* * * * * * *

Fraternally,
C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ————

I was exceedingly glad to learn about your marriage. You must let me congratulate you and wish you every happiness. I know of few greater blessings than to have a wife who is at one with us in our religious belief. The woman ought to be the inspiration of the household; keeping the members of the family up to the highest possible standard of conduct and faith.

* * * * * * *

You ask many questions about Karma. Yes, Karma often acts in the same life,—often almost immediately in fact. If you eat too much and have pain, that is Karma. If you lose your temper and are disagreeable to another, your feeling a few days later that he does not love you as much as you wish him to do, is Karma. Karma can be modified. We are all modifying our Karma every moment. The whole problem of discipleship is an effort to modify our Karma—to overcome and to nullify the effects of our past sins. The bad Karma we have created in the past, causes us to have certain faults and weaknesses, makes us stupid and blind. Our constant effort must be to overcome these faults, to learn not to be stupid and blind. In all of this we are modifying Karma. It is always fluidic, plastic, subject to constant change. Our destiny is entirely in our own hands. We are not the blind slaves of a law which

Digitized by Google

drives us forward; we are the children of a wise parent who guides and directs and gives us tasks and duties which will develop our capacities and cultivate our powers.

Remember that the law of Karma is administered by great, loving, wise and compassionate spiritual beings; and that its purpose is our salvation and our happiness. No two people in the world have the same Karma, and no two people would react in exactly the same way to the same influences. If two men each lose their much loved son, one of them may get bitter, hard, cynical; the other be made gentle and resigned, and be turned towards religion. There is no rule.

There are different kinds of Karma. Physical Karma is like the law of gravitation. If we walk over a precipice, we fall—no matter how good or how bad we may be. If we eat poison, we suffer; and if we take enough, whether by accident or on purpose, we die.

But moral Karma is different. Here the motive counts as well as the actual act. If we make an honest mistake, the compassionate law will save us from the full consequences of our action. We often do unwise things with good motives and escape the normal consequences of unwisdom.

* * * * * * *

Fraternally,
C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ———

I was interested in your quotation from "Casandrá." I believe that the present war will not teach the world the futility of Socialism. Even the *débâcle* of the Russian revolution will not carry home the lesson. I expect a future war between the forces of Socialism and the conservative elements in society. This war may also be international, but with the people of each country fighting against each other.

As for your questions:

Karma can be avoided in one sense, for some one else may pay the price for your sin. That is the true meaning of vicarious atonement. A mother is constantly bearing the burden of her child's wrongdoing, and constantly saves the child from the consequences of his sin. Wherever there is real love, there is likely to be the bearing of another's burden, or Karma. The law itself must be fulfilled; but the law does not care whether you pay the price, or whether I do. That, of course, is a rough and ready answer to a very complicated question.

* * * * * * *

Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Lords of Karma are winnowing,—as when it was said of one of them that his "fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

On the plane of that which is being winnowed, there is turmoil and confusion. But the wielder of the fan knows what he is doing, and why. The thoughts of many hearts must be revealed. The wheat and the chaff must be separated.

We had been discussing this great law of life, both as exemplified in nations and in individuals. Presently, current events were mentioned, as examples.

"Presumably," said the Student, "those who claim to be a majority of the Irish people did not reveal themselves sufficiently during the war, although I should have thought they had. In any case, they continue to reveal themselves. I thought the murder of Commissioner Smyth particularly illuminating."

"Who was he and how was he murdered?" someone asked.

"Smyth had been a Colonel in the regular army during the war. He had won the Victoria Cross for extraordinary gallantry in action. He had lost one arm. When the war was over, he was appointed a Commissioner in Ireland. Because, in that capacity, he performed his duty with conspicuous success, the Sinn Feiners decided to murder him. They waited until this one-armed man was alone in his club, off duty. A dozen of them quietly entered and riddled him with bullets."

"Archbishop Mannix ought to have been there to bless them," commented the Philosopher.

"Yes," answered the Student. "But the wheels of the gods grind slowly. You must not expect too much self-revelation, all of a blow. Give him time. He is doing his best!"

"The Vatican is doing its best also," the Historian remarked. "The decorations in St. Peter's which were used at the canonization of Joan of Arc, were still in place on May 23rd when Oliver Plunket, at one time Archbishop of Armagh, was beatified; and Oliver Plunket is famous simply because he conspired to bring a foreign army into Ireland, for which he was hanged at Tyburn in 1681. His beatification was of course a Sinn Fein event and a compliment to their 'cause'."

"Great breadth of mind, has the Vatican," said the Philosopher grimly. "It is a mystery to me why the Soviet does not get itself baptized under those auspices. Mannix could then be made a Cardinal to look after their interests in Rome."

"When I think of the saints who have grown up within that Church, and of the heroism and self-abandonment of French priests during the war,—the unprincipled political manœuvring of the Vatican assumes the

Digitized by Google

proportions of a world crime, of a sin against the human soul everywhere. It is monstrous. The only explanation is that just as, during the war, the wheat was being separated from the chaff as between nations and as between individuals, so now, with that particular war nominally over, the same process is taking place within nations, within individuals, and within organizations. The high gods must wish to compel devout Roman Catholics to discriminate; to rely more upon the unseen and spiritual, and less upon the external and personal; to follow Christ rather than an ecclesiastical 'walking delegate,' whose first thought is for his religious 'Union' instead of for the principles and purposes of his Lord."

The Student had been speaking. He loves the devotional and mystical literature of Catholicism. It is because of this love, he says, that he so intensely hates the Vatican.

The Historian was the next to speak. "Your condemnation of Rome," he said, "is mild in comparison with that of many Catholic priests. I was talking with one of them not long ago, who admitted frankly that he could not and would not live in Rome itself, and whose disgust for the Roman Cardinals was as profound as his faith in what he described as the divine soul of his Church. He had learned what the Catholic layman also must learn,—to discriminate for himself, as you have said, between that which is from Christ on the one hand, and from the craft and subtlety of the devil on the other hand."

"Meanwhile, however," the Sage suggested at this point, "the Catholic layman, to a far too great extent, takes his cue from those same Roman Cardinals, using his Church as a means to his own political ends, and adopting any sort of 'principles' which lend themselves temporarily to his needs. Thus, the Knights of Columbus, at their supreme convention recently held in New York, unanimously adopted a resolution proposed by United States District Attorney Gallagher of Boston, that:

" 'As Americans and as Knights of Columbus we believe in the right of freedom to [*sic*] every people everywhere to determine the form of government under which they live. It is trite, perhaps, to say it; but say it we do, that the Knights of Columbus, in common with all true Americans, believe that Ireland has the right and ought to be a free and independent nation. This truth is axiomatic and, therefore, no argument is necessary.'

"That resolution quite obviously is not honest. Among the Knights of Columbus there are men of some education, trained, as lawyers or doctors or what not, to know that two cows will not make one horse. Actually, they know that the theory of self-determination is nonsense, and that it was disposed of in this country during the Civil War. Suppose that a majority of the inhabitants of Wisconsin were to say—'We are Germans. We have a right to determine the form of government under which we live. We have a right and ought to be a free and independent nation. We hereby separate ourselves from the United States and invite His Imperial Majesty William of Germany to rule over us.' Would the

Digitized by Google

Knights of Columbus endorse that proposition? If the Alaskans or the Porto Ricans or the natives on the banks of the Panama Canal were to declare their independence; or the Bretons in France, or the Sicilians of Italy, or, perhaps, the negroes of Louisiana or the Jews of New York,—would these Irish-American patriots stand by their 'axiom'? I trow not!"

"The so-called principle of self-determination," the Sage continued after a pause, "is one of the psychic perversities which sprang, fully armed, from the solar plexus of our Capitol during the war.

"Question: If fifty-one per cent of the inhabitants of Albania were uneducated Mohammedans, and forty-nine per cent of them were semi-educated Christians; if neighbouring villages throughout Albania were occupied severally by these separate divisions of the population, and if the chief desire of both Christians and Mohammedans were to kill one another on sight,—how would self-determination work out if both sections independently were to claim a prior right 'to govern their own country their own way'?"

The Student laughed. "If," he said, "the word 'psychic' means, among other things, the unconscious burlesque of an ideal, and therefore of a spiritual reality, it is certainly the right adjective to describe the doctrine of self-determination. Clearly, it can exist only in the Lodge, among disciples. Try it in a nursery (it has often been tried there) and see what happens! Each child has the right of self-determination,—the right to be 'a free and independent child'. Each child has the right to decide what it will eat and when; what it will wear and when; what it will play with and when. . ."

"I suppose you know," interjected the Doctor, "that infantile insanity is enormously on the increase in this country, particularly among the children of the rich, just because so many nurseries actually have been conducted on a basis of 'self-determination' and of 'self-expression'."

"Yes," the Student answered. "I have heard so. The parents of such children—poor little unfortunates—seem to proceed on the theory that there is but one self, which is the lower self, and that Lenine and Madame Montessori are Its prophets.

"When all men are perfect in wisdom and in self-control, there will no longer be need for outer government and for outer control. Consequently, the reforming psychic argues—catching a glimpse of this ultimate attainment and turning it upside-down,—consequently, you should do away with outer control and permit the free expression of the self within, so that the ultimate attainment may be precipitated."

"Quite so," the Doctor commented. "Set free the unbroken colt. Let him follow the inspirations of his spirit. When he is old and dying, he may eat out of your hand—supposing he has not strength enough left to eat you . . . It's a great scheme."

"But seriously," asked the Visitor, rather worried, "does not everything you have been saying apply with equal force to the principles of democracy and of universal suffrage?"

Digitized by Google

"It looks like it," laughed the Doctor.

"But what are you going to do about that?"

"What are you going to do about Sin, and the Influenza?"

"Well,—I can at least try to keep them out of myself."

"Good for you! Perhaps we can do as much when it comes to democracy and self-determination. In any case, we need not encourage them; and, occasionally, from some vantage point of safety, beyond the range of brickbats, it may be possible to suggest to others that *demos* means 'mob', and that the world to-day looks like it!"

"Irrespective of theory," the Engineer suggested, "I wonder what would be the practical result if a foot-ball team were to be captained by a committee. Imagine, in the course of a match, that every decision had to be arrived at by means of conference, discussion, and a formal vote. Compare the chances of that team if matched against another whose captain, without being a genius, were capable of intelligent and quick decision!"

"But suppose the members of a team refuse to play unless all of them have an equal voice in all decisions?" This from the Visitor.

"In that case, they must be content to be beaten whenever they do play. But they cannot have an equal voice. They cannot even make an equal amount of noise. And apart from noise, unless you anticipate unanimity on all occasions, there will be inequality between the man who yells 'No' with the majority, and the man who yells 'Yes' with the minority."

"The Black Lodge delights in confusion," said the Sage.

"Yes; and in self-assertion also," added the Student.

"You realize, of course," the Historian commented, "that you are not criticizing a method of government which is necessarily an expression of democracy. A mob can elect a captain as easily as it can elect a committee. Confusion in the latter case is incessant; in the former case, when the mob elects a captain for a fixed period, the confusion is periodic, while when it elects him 'subject to good behaviour,' which means for so long as he does what the mob wants,—the confusion, while not always incessant, is always frequent and usually violent.

"The essence of democracy, as I see it, is the election of one or of many persons to represent the mob, every member of which has an equal vote regardless of varying intelligence, of varying moral responsibility, of age, of class. And because the best of a nation, at this stage of evolution, must form a small percentage of the whole, it follows that democracy usually elects as its representatives, men who fall far short of the best, as the average must . . . It is a make-shift method, which it is ridiculous to regard as ideal."

"Do you suggest, then," the Visitor asked, "that government by the Hohenzollerns would be better than government by a properly elected President, as in France or the United States?"

"Incidentally," answered the Historian, "you will please keep in

Digitized by Google

mind that the word President means a presiding officer: one who is supposed to preside over, and to voice the decisions of, either a committee or a gathering of elected representatives. Our own recent experience in this country ought to have demonstrated how much confusion arises when that fact is overlooked, and also how impossible it is for a consistent, a continuous policy to be carried out under an elective system. We know, not only in theory but in practice, that the moods of a mob are as unstable as water.

"However, to answer your question properly, I must ask you one: when you speak of 'government by the Hohenzollerns', do you mean a government of devils, by devils? If so, my answer is that I greatly prefer our own or the present French system! Or do you mean a government based upon the dynastic principle?—because, if so, and if we are to discuss the matter intelligently, it is only fair that you should accept the government of Costa Rica as a typical republic."

Our Visitor laughed. "Have it your own way," he said.

"Very well," the Historian answered. "Then we will begin by asking ourselves. . ."

"Pardon me," the Student interrupted, "but I think I foresee where you are wending, and before we leave the subject of government by committee, I should like to read you a passage from *The Adventures of Dunsterforce,* by Major-General Dunsterville, who was in command of the small British force which worked its way during the war, from Bagdad, through Persia, to Baku on the Caspian Sea. General Dunsterville, by the way, was the original, when a boy, of Kipling's Stalky. His adventures when in command of the 'Hush Hush Army', as it was called, are a fitting sequel to Kipling's story. . . When he arrived at Baku, it was his duty to keep out the Turks and the Germans by active co-operation with some untrained Armenians, some Russian 'Reds', and a handful of disciplined Cossacks.

"Dunsterville says: 'As an example of the behaviour of the Red Army troops I will relate an incident that resulted in the loss of one of our armoured cars at this time. Bicherakov ordered a reconnaissance to be carried out by one of his Cossack squadrons supported by a British armoured car. The party passed over a bridge which was held by a strong detachment of the Red Army, and they impressed on the commander of this detachment the importance of his post, as this bridge carried the road over an impassable nullah on their only line of withdrawal. The reconnoitering party carried out their duties and proceeded to withdraw. On arrival at the bridge they found that it was in the hands of the Turks. The Cossack cavalry put up a very good fight in the endeavour to regain possession, and to cover the withdrawal of the armoured car, but the effort did not succeed; the cavalry suffered very heavy losses, and the armoured car fell into the hands of the Turks. One cannot help smiling at the idea of troops in action leaving their posts to attend political meetings, but these comic incidents have tragic endings,

Digitized by Google

and in this case the amusing behaviour of the Red Army soldiers meant the lives of many brave men and the loss of the armoured car. When freedom is carried to the extent of permitting men to leave their military duties during the progress of an action, war becomes impossible.

" 'This is the first example of such failure of duty recorded in the history of this campaign, but it will not be the last. We soon learnt that such conduct was the rule and not the exception.'

"That is all. Trotzky, Lenine, *et al.*, have thrown off the mask since then. The Black Lodge has never been accused of brainlessness. It uses Democracy, which spells confusion, as a stepping-stone. It was used in Russia for that purpose. Trotzky and Lenine, willing tools, forced their way up through their native slime and chaos until they made themselves despots. The Czar, theoretically, was a despot. But he was among the very best of his people. He was so much too good for the majority of them that they revolted. God usually gives us what we deserve! Russia reaps what it sowed. It murdered. It reaped Trotzky and Lenine. It is still reaping murder,—a huge harvest."

There was a pause. The Student turned to the Historian. "Again I apologize for my interruption," he said. "Please tell us what you were going to say. Our Visitor has to leave before long. When I broke in, you . . ."

"I had intended to suggest," the Historian responded, "that an essential preliminary to finding out whether a ship is steering a right course, is to know her destination. What, then, is the destination of peoples and of governments? Also, from what very different ports are those very different vessels sailing? With perfect respect—academically at least—for those who insisted that men gave their lives in the war that the world be made safe for democracy, I should like to point out that if we describe our common destination as *x*, a steamship starting from New York, and a sailing vessel starting from Bombay or Alexandria, cannot properly steer the same course. Further, the course they are steering must depend necessarily, to some exent, upon what stage of their journey they have reached. Considerations such as these would be regarded as trivial, I fear, by those who would apply the Constitution of the United States as a plaster to cover the heads of all mankind. All I can say is that, as a passenger on one of those ships, I should feel more comfortable if the Soviet in command would condescend to take these practical 'trivialities' into account.

"Assuming that you, however, will accept my fundamental proposition, namely, that the question of destination must first be answered, I shall next have to ask you what you think our western world means when it prays—as all sects pray—'Thy Kingdom come'?"

"It doesn't mean anything," the Visitor answered. (He has an honest mind. Some day he will make a good member of The Theosophical Society).

"I am afraid you are right," said the Historian. "But let me ask

Digitized by Google

you this: what is the petition, 'Thy Kingdom come', supposed to mean?"

"I believe," said the Visitor, "that when people give it any significance at all, most of them mean by those words,—'May all that is nice about God, come into the world: the peace and the comforts and fair weather of His Kingdom'; and I think they would add, if they knew enough,—'But I hope He won't interfere'. However, there must be many besides myself whose interpretation is different, and who try sincerely to pray that Christ will rule over us, and over his world, just as he rules already in heaven."

"That," said the Historian, "as I think you know, would be the theosophical interpretation, except that Theosophy would be more specific. For instance: how does Christ reign in his heaven, or, to be still more specific, how does he reign in the Lodge? What is the method of government in the Lodge? By the term 'Lodge', you will understand, we mean that great brotherhood of the elect, who, from all races and in all ages, have struggled upward from selfishness to selflessness, from imperfection toward perfection,—and, in some cases, to perfection itself. Those who have attained completely—who are perfect in love, in wisdom, in power—we speak of as Masters, though they speak of themselves as the Brothers. Above the greatest whom the world has known, there are others, even greater. Thus, when Christ spoke of his Father, he referred sometimes to God, or to the Logos, and sometimes to his spiritual Father in the Lodge,—to a great Master to whom Christ himself looked up. Remember, please, that there can be no finality in the universe; that there can be no entity of whom it may be said, 'He is the last, the greatest, the furthest: there is nothing beyond Him.' Philosophically, that would imply finality, limitation; and there can be no limitation within the Absolute, or, for that matter, within the universe, once you grant, as I think you must, that the universe itself is infinite . . .

"So, within the Lodge, within the great Brotherhood made up of the world's sages and saints and adepts, there are men and women who differ widely in spiritual attainment, from those who have but just crossed the threshold and who still are struggling upwards, to those who reached 'the terrace of enlightenment' in *manvantaras* preceding our own. In other words, the Lodge is an aristocracy, based upon spiritual attainment."

"Could you use some other word?" broke in the Student, rather anxiously. "You know what prejudice there is against the idea of an aristocracy."

"People who read the QUARTERLY," the Historian answered, "are supposed to be open-minded, and if the Recorder intends to use this conversation in the "Screen of Time", I shall be obliged if he will use my term. It is a perfectly wholesome word! It is derived from two Greek words, as I remember it,—from *aristos,* best, and *kratos,* rule. It means, therefore, 'rule by the best', or, as dictionaries translate it,

Digitized by Google

'government by nobles'. Very well: the Lodge is governed by its noblest. Have you any objection to that?"

"I gather," smiled the Visitor, "that an objection, if one were to object, would not greatly affect the fact!"

The Historian laughed. "I admire your resignation," he said; "or in any case your philosophic calm in the face of anything so subversive . . . Aristocracy let it be, then. But a brotherhood too,—the only true brotherhood. 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity', is a reality in the Lodge, and nowhere else. For see how the world perverts, by psychic inversion, the truth within every reality, within every ideal. In the Lodge, aristocracy means government by the best, by the noblest, with the willing, loving, adoring consent of the younger and less perfect. You can imagine it,—can at least try to do so. Assume that Ânanda, the beloved disciple of Gautama Buddha; that St. Paul and many Christian saints; that Madame H. P. Blavatsky and hosts of others—each of them looking to his own Master;—imagine them all there, with but one thought, —to love and to serve. Think, on the one hand, of how they would rush to obey, and, on the other hand, of the perfect fellowship, of the complete 'equality', which would exist between them,—the desire of one and all, that the least shall be as the greatest. Think, if you will, of the love,—yes, even the reverence—of some Master for one of his disciples, a mere child, perhaps, in the spiritual sense, who had fought nobly, and who, in spite of suffering, in spite of darkness, in spite of defeat, had loyally, faithfully, valiantly fought on. Yes,—there is such a thing as spiritual equality. You see it in an ideal family, between parents and children. But the blind world, following the lead of blind poets and of philosophers still blinder; following the lead, finally, of demagogues and devils,—has seized that spiritual fact to reinforce its own egotism, its own self-assertion, and, to the tune of 'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity', has produced . . ."

"—Tammany," interjected the Student.

"Yes,—Tammany; but worse than that, inasmuch as Tammany is merely a surface indication of a deep-seated disease. And the world has treated the ideal of aristocracy in exactly the same way, misusing it, when it has used it, until Germany at last dragged it so low that it disappeared from human ken."

"Did Germany do that, or did the Hohenzollerns?" questioned our Visitor.

"Germany made the Hohenzollerns. The Hohenzollerns did not make Germany. They must have interacted, the one upon the other; but the Hohenzollerns undoubtedly were the horrible efflorescence of their race: they were the answer of Karma to the German desire."

"I can see, dimly, what you mean by equality in the Lodge," continued the Visitor, questioningly; "but I do not see how liberty can co-exist with autocratic power, which I assume your great Masters would possess."

Digitized by Google

"Liberty," answered the Historian; "why, there is the most perfect liberty imaginable. The doors of heaven are not barred behind the conquerors who enter. They can resign! Seriously, those who are there, when not yet perfect, are in danger always of being exiled by the force of resurgent sin. But in that case, they are their own executioners. They become unlike, and automatically cease to share the Lodge consciousness. Remember, please, that the greater the Master, the more perfect his obedience, and that the spirit of disobedience would inevitably create expulsion.

"But now, if I may, I should like to go back to our main topic. I have told you what I believe to be the destination of human development, namely, the Lodge. Much, of course, remains to be said, for the Lodge is not a single cell organism, but is made up of East and West, and of sub-divisions of these. Both the active and the contemplative life are represented. The Lodge is a hierarchical system, capable of infinite expansion."

"You mean, then," said the Visitor, "that instead of evolving toward an undetermined, because as yet unattained, goal,—we are being guided toward a condition which many individuals of all races have already attained?"

"Exactly," the Historian answered.

"I must say that whether true or false, it is a marvellous, a fascinating conception . . . Do you mean that nations are being guided in the same way, toward the same goal?"

"We do," the Historian answered. "On what other basis can you account for the facts of history? Nations grow as individuals grow, and are actuated by the same motives. The theory of economic necessity, as accounting for all the movements of races, and for the passions, heroisms, and sacrifices of national life, has utterly been discredited, except as a contributing factor. The philosophy of history remains to be written. The life of a nation, in some cases, is the effort of the Lodge to lead that nation toward discipleship. In other cases, when that effort would be futile, the Lodge may attempt to merge the best of one nation with the best of another, in the hope that the commixture will be less barren of spiritual fruit than when the two had separate existence. In still other cases, destruction may be the only remedy. But in all cases, the goal of national life is the same as that of the individual,—the manifestation of the soul by the perfecting of character.

"Once more, though, let us go back to our main topic. Let us ask ourselves, with our destination now clearly in mind, whether we can foresee any of the intermediate steps, which nations must take, before they can hope to reach their goal and to enter fully into the consciousness of the Lodge.

"To foresee, we must look back, not only to history but to tradition. Then we must use analogy, asking ourselves, in this case, through what stages of government a man passes, first, within himself, and, secondly,

Digitized by Google

in his recognition of spiritual authority as it exists outside of himself. But to cover that ground adequately, would take hours. This afternoon I can suggest the result only of my own study. We should have to consider the whole method of evolution, as Theosophy explains it: the descent of spirit into matter, until innocence becomes self-conscious,—spirit reascending, with the self-consciousness it has gained, to greater heights than it descended from, together with those elements of matter which it has transformed and glorified. We should have to consider the life of men and of nations in that light, tracing both the gain and the loss,—the loss of primitive innocence, of primitive vision (for men then saw the high gods walking in their midst), and the gain of increasing self-knowledge and self-dependence. Incidentally, if we were to study our subject thoroughly, we should have to read the works of Renouvier, who, of all writers on the philosophy of history, seems to have come nearest to the theosophical interpretation.

"Then, reaching backward beyond the historical period, we should have to investigate tradition, with the result that everywhere we should find traces of Adept Kings, and of 'gods' who dwelt among men, instructing, guiding, governing this nation or that, adored by their people for the noble work they did.

"I cannot even touch on the analogy of our own spiritual experience, and on what we can learn of progressive methods of government from that. There is the primitive obedience of babyhood, of innocence; there is the revolt, the self-assertion, the 'democracy' of youth; there is the anarchy and Bolshevism of some lives, and, in others, there is the voluntary obedience to spiritual guidance, culminating, when discipleship is reached, in conscious obedience to a living Master . . . You can work that out for yourself.

"So far as tradition is concerned—which I accept, when it is universal, as being at least as valid as history—we must look for a return, on a higher plane, of that which used to be. We must expect in the future a repetition of that which was, though greatly modified, of course, by added experience and self-consciousness. Instead of the vision of innocence, there will be direct and related perception. Progress, being subject to cyclic law, passes up a spiral, as it were, after the fashion of a cork-screw. We do not return to the same place, as Nietzsche and others have wrongly argued. We return to a similiar place, on a higher level of attainment.

"We may look, therefore, for an actual coming of Christ's kingdom, on earth as now in heaven,—though I confess that it seems a very long way off, because I do not believe he will come until he is wanted. Prior to his coming, however, we may look for an organized effort to induce his coming; we may look for centuries of preparation by those who know him and love him and who long for his advent. We may look also for a period, preceding his next incarnation, when the world, or the western world in any case, will be governed by a group of his

Digitized by Google

disciples, as kings, consciously co-operating, and presided over, I suspect, by an Emperor (I believe, Emperor of France), so as to prepare the world for the real reign, the real glory, the real consummation, which will follow."

The Historian was deeply moved. He spoke quietly, but it was easy to see that the day of that far-off kingdom was the consuming passion of his heart.

"I do not like to speak about it," he said, "because men make faces. They do not understand him,—that great one. Mention his name, and while some sneer, others try to look pious. He is everything,—rapture itself, and the source of it. He is the soul of every poet; the vision of every artist. He is the hidden beauty in light and in shadow,—the joy of life, and its end . . . Some day they will know, but not yet, not yet."

It was the Objector who brought him back to earth. (Our Visitor remained silent, slightly bewildered, but disturbed, impressed.)

"You are not suggesting, I trust, that, as a preliminary, we should turn the United States from a republic into a kingdom, and that God should appoint Mayor Hylan, or some other American nobleman, to act as our first king? I should hate to have to emigrate."

"No, that is not my suggestion," the Historian answered serenely. "And, to be frank with you, I simply cannot imagine how this country could at any time become other than it is, constitutionally or otherwise."

"Perhaps it is to persist as an Awful Warning," the Objector countered.

"I hope not, but you can never tell! . . . In any case, I have not been trying to suggest a next step for any country,—certainly not for our own. I have been attempting to show the absurdity of treating a make-shift as if it were an ideal. Democracy is in no sense an ideal. It is a stepping-stone, and, presumably, as things now are, in certain cases it is a necessary stepping-stone. Even in those cases, however, it need not and should not be used as a seat, much less as a bed. Apart from other considerations, as a bed it is wretchedly uncomfortable! On the other hand, as I have said, I have no political or constitutional programme for this country; no idea what its next stepping-stone should be. Until it is converted, I doubt whether it greatly matters what form of government it has. And I suspect that is true, more or less, of all the western peoples. In Europe, of course, aristocracy still exists as a form. No matter how decadent, how unworthy of its name, there is something there to reform. Here, there is nothing to reform, except the mob,—and to reform a mob is about as easy as to reform the winds."

"What a pessimist you are!" exclaimed the Objector.

"No, I am not. On the contrary, I am deeply optimistic. I believe in magic, in miracles, in the omnipotence of love,—in all the things which make optimism possible and pessimism impossible. But however that

Digitized by Google

may be, please understand"—turning to our Visitor—"that I have been speaking for myself only: in no sense for The Theosophical Society or for the QUARTERLY."

"I am grateful to you in any case," the Visitor replied. And then he left, having told us beforehand of an appointment, which he was going to keep, he said, as his first essay in Theosophy!

When we were alone together—for the Objector had left too—the Student told us that he had received a letter, asking for suggestions about prayer. Without mentioning names, he described the character and circumstances of his correspondent, and asked for our advice.

"I would tell him first," volunteered the Philosopher, "that the motive of his prayer is more important than its form, or than the objective which his prayer sets forth. For instance: I have a letter or an article to write. I pray for light, for guidance. Now the real value of the prayer, as I see it, depends upon whether I want guidance for myself—for my own protection or preservation or reputation,—or whether I want really to step aside, to obliterate myself and my own interests, that the Master may speak as he wills, for his purposes. We should watch ourselves ceaselessly for that difference of motive."

"I agree with you," said the Neophyte, "but I would tell him also that he will not have mastered the meaning of prayer until, step at a time, adding hour to hour, he succeeds at last in transforming his habitual conversations with himself—the back and forth talk of his own mind—into habitual conversation with the Master. To do this, he must use recollection, imagination, will. He must not strain, but must imagine, creatively, what the Master would say to him. As he does this, he will find before long that he has pierced through to reality, for he will have provided a channel along which the Master's thought can travel."

"All true," commented the Ancient. "But do not forget faith. I doubt if many of us realize the dynamic power it has. Certainly, without it, nothing can be moved,—not even your own hand by your own will. You must believe it can move to make movement possible."

"Do you remember," added the Student finally,—"do you remember the appeal of the Gael on this same subject, shortly before he went to Europe? I cannot quote his words, but you will recall in any case his complaint that Anglo-Saxons have so little faith; and then—was it not? —'Children of the Dawn, children of the Dawn, have faith! Prayers never go unanswered. Pray for what you want, and what He needs will be given you. Pray and keep on praying, though no dew fall from heaven and though earth give torment and no more. He hears. With heart wide open to receive (was it not pierced!), he waits till brave persistence, till heroic faith, have given him the clay for miracles. And then, miracles happen! When darkness is worst, the messengers of light appear. Magic is made manifest. The whole world is changed. . . . But without faith, ye can do nothing'." T.

Digitized by Google

Laotzu's Tao and Wu Wei, Dwight Goddard and Henri Borel. Brentano's, New York, $1.25.

We have only one criticism of this admirable little book, and may as well begin with it: The title is misleading. It gives the impression that there are two books by Lao Tse, and that we have translations of them. But there is, in reality, only one book by the Chinese sage, the Tao-Teh-King; while the second part of this volume is a modern, romantic interpretation of Lao Tse's philosophy by Henri Borel, who has put it into dialogue form, roughly following, one may say, the model of the Bhagavad Gita. Therefore we have, in Henri Borel's study, first the approach to the Master; then the entering of the disciple into the spirit of the Master; and finally the disciple's return to outer work. As a title for this fine piece of work, Henri Borel has chosen two words which are characteristic of Lao Tse: Wu Wei, literally, "No Work," indicating the idea of detachment exactly as set forth at the beginning of the third book of the Bhagavad Gita: "Not by withholding from works does a man reach freedom from works," and so forth.

In this modern dialogue on Lao Tse's philosophy, there are passages of great beauty, such as this:

"There shines in each one of us the inextinguishable light of the soul. . . . The eternal Tao dwells in all. . . . All bear within them an indestructible treasure. . . ."

And in general one may say that Henri Borel has given a true and worthy interpretation of Lao Tse, though it is deeply tinged with the Western spirit.

The first half of this composite book is a translation of the Tao-Teh-King, and, so far as we can judge, an excellent one, which sticks very close to the text and, at the same time, expresses its spirit both in depth of thought and in excellence of style.

But, good as the text is, we feel under almost greater obligations to Mr. Goddard for the Introduction, which begins:

"I love Laotzu! That is the reason I offer another interpretative translation. . . . I want you to appreciate this wise and kindly old man, and come to love him. . . ."

Of great value and truth is this passage concerning the meaning of Tao:

"Although for two thousand years he has been misunderstood and derided, to-day the very best of scientific and philosophic thought, which gathers about what is known as Vitalism, is in full accord with Laotzu's idea of the Tao. Every reference that is made to-day to a Cosmic Urge, Vital Impulse, and Creative Principle can be said of the Tao. Everything that can be said of Plato's Ideas and Forms and of Cosmic Love, as being the creative expression of God, can be said of the Tao. When Christian scholars came to translate the Logos of St. John, they were satisfied to use the word 'Tao.'"

C. J.

The Gist of Swedenborg, by Julian K. Smyth and William F. Wunsch, is a compilation in a hundred pages of salient thoughts of the mystic philosopher, giving in brief form all that is best in his thirty-odd volumes. Bearing in mind

Digitized by Google

Madame Blavatsky's caution that, though "his clairvoyant powers were very remarkable," nevertheless, "they did not go beyond this plane of matter" [Swedenborg *saw* the inhabitants of Mars dressed as modern Europeans]; and again, "all that he says of subjective worlds and spiritual beings is evidently far more the outcome of his exuberant fancy, than of his spiritual insight" (*Glossary*),—members of the Society will find much that is intuitive, suggestive, and even brilliant in this compilation. In view of the recrudescence of interest in Swedenborg, which bears fruit in numerous biographies and translations of his works, and in the erection of an imposing cathedral near Philadelphia, a summary of his teaching is particularly timely. His more extravagant phases are not included, as the book is obviously intended to attract the average unthinking Christian. It is, therefore, Swedenborg at his best. That best may, perhaps, be appreciated by the following excerpts:—

"Those who love their country, and from goodwill do good to it, after death love the Lord's kingdom, for this is their country there; and they who love the Lord's kingdom, love the Lord, for He is the All in all of His Kingdom."

"The only faith that endures with man springs from heavenly love. Those without love have knowledge merely, or persuasion. Just to believe in truth and in the Word is not faith. Faith is to love truth, and to will and do it from inward affection for it."

"It is the mind which makes another and a new man. The change of state cannot be perceived in man's body, but in his spirit."

"The Church at large consists of the men who have the Church in them."

MARION HALE.

Benedictine Monachism, by the Right Rev. Cuthbert Butler, Abbot of Downside Abbey; published by Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., $6.50.

By readers of the QUARTERLY who are familiar with several articles in past issues on the Benedictines and St. Benedict's Rule, this volume will be welcomed and prized. It is one of the most interesting books the reviewer has ever read. The learned author is so much the master of his many subjects, that each chapter of the twenty-two, devoted to some special characteristic of ancient or modern Benedictine life, or to a discussion and interpretation of the Rule, is the synthesis at once of a wide and of a profound study, giving the reader the fruits of a mature judgment and ripened scholarship. Indeed, the Benedictine tradition of thoroughness in scholarship is exemplified afresh; and the forty years which Father Butler has spent as a Benedictine, bear witness by their fruits to the soundness of that venerable institution to-day.

There is practically no inquiry about St. Benedict, his Rule, its inception and development through fifteen hundred years; or about the history of the Order, its offshoots, its effects on European history, and its contributions to European civilization and culture, which does not receive masterly treatment. Perhaps the most original contribution is a chapter on "The Benedictine Idea in the Centuries"—in which the candid admission is made of "the mediæval presentation of Benedictine life", that, "nothing else can be said than that it was a complete transformation of the manner of life planned by St. Benedict at Monte Cassino. . . . It was more. It was a reversal of one of the things he deliberately did in his reconstruction of Western monachism" (pp. 198-199). St. Benedict did not conceive an "Order", in the sense of a hierarchical organization of religious, bound by vows, and devoted to some special type of life or function in Church polity, as represented by the Franciscans or the Jesuits. St. Benedict founded "a school of the service of God", which, it is pointed out, is not even "a school of perfection", the latter implying a different point of view. No, St. Benedict, along with St. Gregory the Great and St. Bernard, was true to a type which was "Western", in contradistinction to "Eastern". They represented "a mysticism purely spiritual, of a

Digitized by Google

simplicity equal to its elevation" (p. 91), "non-philosophical, being unaffected by the neo-Platonism that preceded it, or the scholasticism that followed it. . . . It is purely objective, empirical" (p. 90). In two valuable chapters, Father Butler expands "Benedictine Mysticism" and "Benedictine Life Contemplative", pointing out that whereas, outside the Benedictine tradition, most mysticism in the West was really Eastern or Scholastic, with St. Benedict one finds the truly original Western contribution to mystical experience—a valuable distinction which the author promises to develop in a forthcoming book to be entitled *Western Mysticism*. Properly understood, again, a "contemplative" life is not that of Cassian's early Egyptian hermit-recluse, as imagined by the layman to-day, and as exemplified only by the Calmaldolese and Carthusians. Nor is it the "contemplative concentration" of "the Eastern mind as ordinarily constituted even to this day, be it Buddhist, Brahmin, or Mohomedan", which is "rarely met with among Westerns" (p. 96). It is the "mixed life", the life lived by Christ on earth, in its perfection. St. Benedict's "only conception of a contemplative life is one in which active good works hold a considerable, and even, in point of time, a preponderant place; but in which for all that, the effort to exercise also the works of the contemplative life is kept habitually in operation" (p. 99). Again: "St. Gregory did not look on contemplation as a nearly superhuman thing, one of the rarest graces. On the contrary, he believed it to be within the reach of all men of goodwill who give themselves seriously to prayer and keep due guard upon their hearts" (p. 100).

It is impossible in the compass of a review to do justice to the many excellences of this volume, or even to catalogue points of special interest. The reader is urged to seek those out for himself. One error, however, we feel called upon to notice. In the chapter on Mysticism, preparing for his definition of the word, which has "a good and a bad" meaning, the author classes "spiritualism and hypnotic phenomena, theosophy and 'Christian Science'" together. Like so many others, Father Butler seems totally unaware of the fact that there is Theosophy, as apart from *a* theosophy which he does know and which he rightly denominates "a counterfeit of religion": Theosophy, which is not an "ism", but which is precisely what St. Paul meant when he spoke of Christ, *Theou Sophia*, the Wisdom of God; and which we venture to suggest is the ideal and wisdom striven for, alike by St. Benedict and by Father Butler himself. A. G.

Digitized by Google

QUESTION No. 246 (Continued).—*Will you kindly define the following terms: "Higher and lower psychism"; "Occultism and pseudo-occultism".*

ANSWER.—I have been asked to add a word to the two answers already contributed to this question.

I would agree that psychism, as that term is generally used, could be defined "as all forms of lower mental activity, reasonings, imagination, emotions, etc."; but when the distinctions between higher and lower psychism are sought, such a definition runs the danger of being misleading. Owing to the Law of Correspondences ("as above, so below"), the psychic world, strictly speaking, could not be confined to the lower mental and emotional planes. The higher realms must also possess that which is the equivalent on their own planes. *Light on the Path* makes the distinction clear in the use of the word *astral;* and higher and lower astral is but another way of saying higher and lower psychic, though astral is more often used to designate the *realm,* and psychic to designate the *faculty.* These terms, however, owing to the fact that the users rarely understand what they are talking about, are too loosely employed for any such distinction, as I have just made, to hold beyond a certain limited point of suggestion.

I would define the psychic world as the world of reflection; and the psychic individual as one who sees the reflection of something, or sees by a reflected light, instead of beholding directly. We may see an object in a mirror, and if the mirror be true and clean, we may see that object accurately; only, we must always make allowance for the fact that everything is reversed. If the mirror be cracked, distorted, covered with dust or mud, we are likely to have very dim and inaccurate, if not seriously misleading pictures. Also we may see an object by moonlight. The object is there and we see it; the facts are beyond question. Yet equally true is it that the same object, beheld in broad daylight, wears an entirely different aspect, so different, often, as to seem another object altogether. No man questions, however, in which circumstance the object has been truly discerned. These matters of everyday experience furnish us with simple clues.

If the objection be raised that, in the spiritual world, reflection cannot exist—an objection which I have heard—I would venture to suggest what seems to me the faulty metaphysics of such an attitude. Surely the higher the plane the greater its inclusiveness, since Unity is the ultimate; and therefore in the higher planes we must of necessity find all that is contained in the lower planes, transfigured from things of sense to things of spirit, from things of ugliness to things of beauty, from things of decay to things of immortality,—the perversions redeemed to their original purity and purpose. Postulate God as the one Reality, and Unity as the ultimate, as does Theosophy, and I do not see how the objection can hold. Reflection is not perversion *in esse,* and must exist at every point of duality, short of the final Absolute in which duality is lost. This last, however, is a condition which we can postulate, though by no means conceive. The highest reaches of the imagination barely touch its possibilities, but from these shadowy filaments we sense the mystery and awe of its all-comprehensiveness.

In the higher psychic world the reflection is pure and direct. Allowing always for *reversal,* what is seen is accurate. So, too, the higher psychic individual has a clean and perfect mirror. But it is in a mirror that he sees. The thing in itself

Digitized by Google

he does not see; indeed his back must be turned upon it, more or less, for purposes of seeing. The psychic sees always not merely "through", but *into*, "a glass"; and "darkly" or not, as his psychic faculty be pure or otherwise, according to his own purity.

A little consideration of this, and its many implications, will help to clear any misconceptions in the mind. All that science has determined regarding the use of mirrors, and the reflection and refraction of light in connection with them, etc., can be advantageously investigated by those wishing really to pursue the subject; and in these days of extreme psychic refraction and confusion, such research would well repay the time and effort expended.

In the higher psychic realms, only that which is in and of higher psychic realms can be reflected. The circle *"Pass not"* protects it from contamination with everything not of equal purity of essence. To the lower psychic individual these upper realms are dark; only the back of the mirror can be seen, and that forms the roof of his sky. Therefore the lower psychic world reflects what is of the lower worlds alone, and the lower psychic individual sees nothing outside of them, no matter what he may fancy, or what names he may use.

To behold both worlds as they are, is the peculiar privilege of the spiritual seer. Spiritual vision is like a great beam of light which flashes up or down as does a powerful searchlight. Being of the nature of the highest spiritual planes, it has the force of those planes, and therefore no lower plane can obstruct it. The spiritual seer is he who possesses this faculty of vision. He may possess much or he may possess little; he may have deep undertanding of what he sees, or he may have as yet acquired but slight understanding of it. The distinction between himself and the higher psychic is not one of *degree*, but of *quality*. The higher psychic may see a great deal, but he only sees reflections, and so can never be sure,—the least breath of wind may alter the whole picture. The spiritual seer may not yet have acquired the power to see *much*, but what he sees will be the thing in itself, and so he can be sure. Also the Master's light can reinforce him, which in the case of the psychic would be impossible, for the Master's light would shatter his mirror.

There is an interesting consideration in this connection. Such powerful light must act as a disintegrating force on lower forms of substance, and less ethereal combinations of elements and atoms. A man to possess any of this force, must therefore to a safe extent partake of its nature. Also to be flooded with this light, as it might come to him from the Lodge or from his own Master, or even from a highly developed fellow-student, would involve grave dangers for him, and we can see from this the need for much withholding on the part of those above us, much shading and tempering. Were we, in our impure and undeveloped condition, to stand in the ray of that light, disintegration of all save the original germ of divine life would instantaneously occur. God in mercy withholds knowledge and power, insisting that we shall become as "little children," and be led step by step. This represents not merely our only hope of attainment, but our only hope of *survival*. Should we push ourselves, by the force of our own wills, into the direct field of that light (an attainment, difficult indeed, but by no means impossible), instant extinction would ensue of all that constitutes conscious individuality.

Experiments in the use of various kinds of light in the treatment of disease, poisonous growths, etc., show us also the curative powers of that spiritual light when administered to the diseases of our souls. This is our major profit in the confession of our sins to those in spiritual authority (by which I mean, of course, *those possessing this spiritual power*), and above all when we lay our hearts bare before our Master. His spiritual vision, considering with wisely adjusted power the deadly growths and poisons within us, disintegrates and withers them. All disciples, therefore, who have attained the rank of Apostles, or even are priests *in fact*, have the power to "heal the sick", for they cannot have attained this rank

Digitized by Google

without having acquired the faculty of spiritual vision to a definite degree. It is not touch that heals, but vision. Touch is often used as a medium, but the healing power does not exist in the touch, but in the light behind it.

I should like to make another minor suggestion. On the physical plane, however perfect a man's sight, however much he may see, there is one object he can never behold save by reflection, and that is *himself*. From which we may deduce that in his consideration of himself in his own mind, he can never see himself save psychically. How much of our self-assurance and self-assertiveness would be corrected, could the full significance of this fact be borne in upon us, could we once realize that hardly anyone has so imperfect a view of us, as we ourselves!

Furthermore, if the common facts of daily experience were studied in this way, if they were taken as symbols of inner truths, and hints for guidance in the inner life, how much of information we should gain to the profit of our souls!

CAVÉ.

QUESTION NO. 247.—*I have heard it said that we must not let our attitude toward life become "flattened out" and grey, but that at the same time we must exercise restraint. I think a great many people feel that the two things are incompatible—that restraint necessarily results in "flattening out." What is wrong in such a case—is it the kind of restraint that is exercised, or a wrong reaction of the person restrained, or both?*

ANSWER.—It is the restraint of the levees along its banks that keeps the Mississippi a deep river and prevents it from flattening itself out in innumerable swamps along its course. It is the same with a man. If he fail to restrain his innumerable desires, all his force will run out into them and leave him utterly flat and impotent. Restraint stops the leaks. There can never be power without it.

That part of us which we restrain, our lower nature, is very likely to feel "flattened" out and to raise a great clamour about it. The trouble is that we permit ourselves to be deceived by these wailing voices into identifying ourselves with them and feeling that *we* are flattened out. The remedy is right self-identification.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—The questioner is right. Restraint does flatten one out because it is so often merely negative. We restrain our desires and put nothing in their place. The result is a void and there is nothing flatter than a void. It is the old case of the man from whom a devil was cast. Seven devils returned and filled the void. People are afraid to follow their intuition because it may be mistaken. They are afraid to go by the past because they do not want to harden themselves against progress. They will not act because they are afraid of making a mistake. The result is that life does become grey and flat. What is needed is a purpose. One thing should be restrained in order that something else may be put in its place. It should be a positive process, not a negative one. If a man says to himself all day, "I will not think evil thoughts, I will not think evil thoughts," he is keeping his mind on evil thoughts and getting nowhere. If he says, "I will think good thoughts and will reject anything incompatible with good thoughts," he has a chance for success.

Y.

NOTICE

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

All mail intended for Mrs. Gregg personally, as well as that for the Secretary's Office, should be sent hereafter to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York. Mrs. Gregg is residing no longer at 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn.

A NEW EDITION

The Quarterly Book Department has brought out a new edition of *Through the Gates of Gold*, price $1.20. This book is recommended as preparation for the study of *Light on the Path*.

Digitized by Google

STANDARD BOOKS

Blavatsky, H. P. Five Years of Theosophy	cloth,	$2.50
Key to Theosophy	cloth,	2.50
Secret Doctrine, The, Vols. I and II and Index	cloth,	12.50
Theosophical Glossary	cloth,	5.00
Voice of the Silence	cloth, 8¾; leather,	1.00
Cavé. Fragments, Volume I	boards,	1.00
Volume II	boards,	1.00
Hillard, Katherine. Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine	cloth,	5.00
Primer of Theosophy, A.	paper,	.05
Johnston, Charles. Bhagavad Gita	Translated, annotated, cloth,	1.25
	lamb leather, India paper,	1.75
From the Upanishads	paper,	.50
Parables of the Kingdom, The	paper,	.50
Patanjali's Yoga Sutras	Translated, annotated; cloth, India paper,	1.25
Song of Life, The	paper,	.75
Judge, William Q. Bhagavad Gita	Edited; cloth, 8¾; leather,	1.00
Culture of Concentration	paper,	.10
Letters That Have Helped Me, Volume I	cloth,	1.00
Volume II	cloth,	1.00
Ocean of Theosophy	cloth,	1.10
Keightley, Archibald. Spiritual Life, The	paper,	.20
Theosophy as an Influence in Life	paper,	.20
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger. Meditations	paper,	.30
Talks on Religion	cloth,	1.00
Theosophical Society and Theosophy, The	paper,	.20
Sinnett, A. P. Esoteric Buddhism	cloth,	2.00
Occult World, The	cloth,	2.00
Walker, E. D. Reincarnation	cloth,	1.75
Idyll of the White Lotus	cloth,	1.25
Light on the Path	cloth, 8¾; leather,	1.00
Through the Gates of Gold	cloth,	1.00

The foregoing prices are now correct but all publishers make their prices as subject to change without notice.

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Devotional: Bhagavad Gita; Fragments; From the Upanishads; Letters That Have Helped Me; Light on the Path; The Parables of the Kingdom; The Song of Life; Through the Gates of Gold; Voice of the Silence.
Philosophical: Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine; Five Years of Theosophy; Key to Theosophy; Reincarnation; The Secret Doctrine; Talks on Religion; Theosophical Glossary; Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.
Inspirational: Culture of Concentration; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditations; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the inner forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creeds, dogmas, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1875:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good-will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avows its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical centers, except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and cooperation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of man and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever agencies pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to ascertain and establish a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the path to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Digitized by Google

VOL. XVIII. No. 3 JANUARY, 1921 No. 71

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Quarterly

Published by the Theosophical Society at
[illegible] Washington street
Brooklyn, New York

Price for non-members, $1.00 per annum; single copies, 25 cents.

In London, single copies may be obtained from any bookseller, and subscriptions may be sent to [illegible] Watkins, 21, Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C. 2. England.
Annual subscription rates on request.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XVIII, No. 3

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	193
FRAGMENTS	209
WILLIAM BLAKE	207
GOSSIP	221
"BY WHOM?"	225
LIFE AND DEATH	231
DANTE SKETCHES	237
HORIZONS	245
CONSCIOUSNESS AND HABIT	248
WHAT WE ALL KNOW	259
ESCAPE OR ACHIEVEMENT (Reprint)	264
SCREEN OF TIME	269
LETTERS TO STUDENTS	277
REVIEWS	283
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	286

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered July 17, 1916, at Brooklyn, N. Y., as second-class matter,
under Act of Congress of July 16, 1894.

Copyright 1921, by The Theosophical Society

Digitized by Google

JANUARY, 1921

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Theosophy, Science and Religion

THEOSOPHY, Divine Wisdom, is the Spirit of Reconciliation, working harmony. It first establishes the divine balance in us, leading the activities of body and mind into harmony with the spiritual nature, and then, through immemorial ages, bringing harmony among men and the races of men, by infusing all with the Holy Spirit of God.

During the last thirty or forty years, there have been few causes of inner disharmony more poignant, and more charged with pain, than what is called the "conflict between religion and science;" which is, in fact, the contest between the external mind, with its account of the universe, and the interior spirit, with its account of the universe. And perhaps there is no field in which Theosophy has been more completely successful than in this, neither sacrificing religion to science nor science to religion, but working harmony between them, giving each its true development in the light of Divine Wisdom.

We have a recent echo of that earlier conflict in a large pamphlet bearing the title: "The Great Question of the Day, Creation versus Evolution, for the first time brought prominently before the world of science and theology alike, and overwhelmingly defended in favor of a Creative Interference; A Study in recent Anthropology." The subtitle, which, in its fulness, suggests the fashion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, reads: "A series of three articles on the physical, mental and moral arguments for a direct creation of man by supernatural Agency, embodying the latest scientific discoveries." The author is Dr. Philo Laos Mills, and the pamphlet bears the Imprimatur of Cardinal Gibbons, who writes thus to Dr. Mills:

"In view of the deplorable havoc that is being wrought in our midst by the godless evolutionism and materialism of the day, I cannot but welcome most cordially your valuable contribution on the opposite side. Personally I am convinced that the days of Darwinism are numbered.

Digitized by Google

Any science that will serve to show that man was created in the image and likeness of the Almighty cannot but merit the highest commendation of every sincere and right-minded thinker. May God bless you in your noble undertaking and secure the widest publicity for your excellent work."

Dr. Mills, in all likelihood without being conscious of it, has, in his main argument and in many of his views, gone a long way towards the positions that were taken up in *The Secret Doctrine,* published thirty-two years ago; he reiterates many of the criticisms of Darwinism there set forth, especially where Darwin's theory deals with man; and he reaches conclusions which, while not going as far as those of *The Secret Doctrine,* nevertheless tend strongly in the same direction.

It will, therefore, be of value and of interest to indicate the conclusions and arguments of Dr. Mills, and, further, to suggest, at several points, the way in which *The Secret Doctrine* rounds out his conclusions.

In the Synopsis of the Argument, Dr. Mills states his major proposition thus:

"It is certain that the earliest types of man are *enormously separated* from any of the simian types and are followed by a *slowly degenerating* or semi-pithecoid type of which the modern 'savage' and the buried remains furnish many examples."

We shall come presently to the minor premiss and the conclusion. First, let us see how Dr. Mills establishes his major premiss.

He rests much of the purely physical side of his case on the broken remnants of the "Piltdown skull," the history of which is as follows: In the autumn of 1911, Mr. Charles Dawson discovered these fragments in the lower stratum of a flint-bearing gravel overlying the Wealden formation (the Hastings Beds) at Piltdown, near Fletching, in Sussex, England. This gravel stratum is a part of the former bed of the river Ouse, which flows into the English Channel a few miles east of Brighton; but, since this gravel was laid down, the Ouse has cut its channel some eighty feet below that level, giving an index of the long spaces of time that have passed since then.

In the neighbourhood of these skull fragments was found a part of a jaw, with which, in combination with the skull fragments, Mr. Dawson and Dr. Charles A. Smith Woodward indulged in a reconstruction that might be almost exactly described by certain lines of a poem of Bret Harte's: the relics of "an animal that was extremely rare." Or one might, with some justice, call it an unconscious emulation of the less ingenuous feat of the late P. T. Barnum, who united the head and body of a monkey to the tail of a fish, in the earlier days of his famous museum.

Barnum acted in obedience to a world-old myth; the myth called for a mermaid, and a mermaid he produced. It is instructive that Mr. Dawson and Dr. Woodward did very much the same thing. Modern mythology called for a "missing link," part monkey, part human, and a "missing link" was accordingly produced, not by joining a monkey and

Digitized by Google

a fish, but by combining the fragments of a woman's skull (for it seems that this is the skull of a woman), with the jawbone of a chimpanzee. The facts were set forth and commented on in THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for October, 1919 (pp. 175-6).

The two points of interest about the Piltdown skull are, that it is definitely human, not simian, and that it is quite certainly of very high antiquity.

As to the second point, the skull fragments were found close to the tooth of a rather early Pliocene type of elephant, the molar of a mastodon, and the molar of a bear belonging to the first half of the Pleistocene period. The stratum of gravel was composed of Pliocene drift, probably reconstructed in the Pleistocene epoch. In general, there was a characteristic land fauna of Pliocene age.

As to the capacity of the Piltdown skull, it is so fragmentary that it is far from easy to put the pieces together; therefore estimates differ greatly, ranging from 1070 to 1600 cubic centimetres. But it is undoubtedly human, and almost certainly of Pliocene age.

Dr. Mills might have taken an even stronger example in the Galley Hill skull, found in a high gravel bed above the Thames, in Kent. It is also almost certainly of Pliocene age, found in a stratum which, in the same neighbourhood, contains remains of a Pliocene elephant and rhinoceros, and other remains which tell of a warm and therefore pre-glacial or interglacial period. And the type of the Galley Hill skull is undoubtedly high, so high that many scientists too firmly wedded to the dogmatic side of Darwinism have disputed its antiquity for that reason alone; which is, of course, remaking the facts to fit the theories, instead of forming the theories on the facts.

We may sum up the position by quoting from *Prehistoric Man*, by W. L. H. Duckworth (1912):

"On the whole, then, the evolutionary hypothesis seems to receive support from three independent sources of evidence (skull form, associated animal remains, implements).

"But if in one of the very earliest stages, a human form is discovered wherein the characters of the modern higher type are almost if not completely realized, the story of evolution thus set forth receives a tremendous blow. Such has been the effect of the discovery of the Galley Hill skeleton. . . . The argument is reasonable, which urges that if men of the Galley Hill type preceded in point of time the men of the lower Neanderthal type, the ancestor of the former (Galley Hill man) must be sought at a far earlier period than that represented by the Galley Hill gravels. As to this, it may be noted that the extension of the 'human period,' suggested by eoliths (the earliest flint implements) for which Pliocene, Miocene, and even Oligocene antiquity is claimed, will provide more than this argument demands. . . . But if this be so, the significance of the Neanderthal type of skeleton is profoundly altered. It is no longer possible to claim only an 'ancestral' position for that type

Digitized by Google

in its relation to modern men. It may be regarded as a degenerate form. Should it be regarded as such, a probability exists that it ultimately became extinct, so that we should not expect to identify its descendants through many succeeding stages. That it did become extinct is a view to which the present writer inclines. . . ."

We have, therefore, the fully human type of the Galley Hill and Piltdown gravel beds, associated with a Pliocene elephant and rhinoceros, both belonging to a warm climate; and we have the decidedly inferior and much later Neanderthal type, associated with a later Pleistocene elephant (mammoth) and generally with the reindeer, both belonging to a much colder period. And from this sequence Dr. Mills draws the conclusion that we are faced, not by a steady upward development, but by a high initial level, followed by a downward curve of degeneration, which again curved upward to modern times.

Dr. Mills makes no attempt to fix the date of the early, higher type. It belongs either to the beginning of the Pleistocene period, or, more probably, to the still earlier Pliocene. In 1909, Dr. Sturge estimated a part only of the Pleistocene period at 700,000 years. Dr. Sturge allows 300,000 years since the earliest Neolithic implements; so that we may assume 1,000,000 in round numbers as the time that has elapsed since the beginning of the Pleistocene, the high Galley Hill type thus being a million years old, or more (Dr. Sturge, Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, January, 1909; published in 1911).

We may say, therefore, that the facts fairly sustain Dr. Mills' argument from the human fossils: that a type of man as high as that of today existed much earlier than the degenerate Neanderthal type. The approximate age we have assigned to this high early type, a million years, agrees fairly closely with the estimate given in *The Secret Doctrine* for the duration of Pleistocene time (II, 710, 1888).

Dr. Mills bases a second argument on the comparatively high spirituality and morality of certain "primitive" tribes, chiefly belonging to the Negrito races of the Malay region; tribes which he believes closely to resemble the men of the Galley Hill type, and to be, in a sense, unchanged descendants of that type. He wisely includes in the equipment of these primitive races many powers popularly called magical, which students of Theosophy would be inclined to class as psychical.

Here again we find ourselves in general agreement with Dr. Mills. And we are particularly attracted by his conclusion:

"Thus we see that there is a material or technical progress from age to age. . . . Moreover, the spiritual and the ideal come first, the practical and the useful follow later; and from this point of view *there is a higher science in primitive times than in any other period of Humanity*. The primitive super-man has no use for a flying machine when 'his soul can soar above the clouds'; nor for a wireless outfit when 'he can see the distant vision in the shining water.' . . . Can this be explained in any other way than by a *primordial communication of super-*

Digitized by Google

natural truth to the original ancestors of mankind? How can we otherwise account for its increasing brilliancy the further we mount up into the past? And if a revelation be once admitted, a supreme Creator and Elevator of man becomes a necessity. There is no illumination without an Illuminator!" (The italics are Dr. Mills'.)

With the general thought expressed in these sentences many students of Theosophy will find themselves in hearty agreement. This primitive revelation they think of as the work of the Dhyan Chohan, the Planetary Spirit, representative of the Logos, incarnated among the first races, and impressing on their plastic minds the broad outlines of spiritual teaching, which have reverberated down the ages and are, in fact, preserved, though only as a distant echo, by the primitive tribes whom Dr. Mills so well and justly describes.

But many students of Theosophy would go much further. They hold that this primitive revelation, once bestowed upon mankind, was preserved in its completeness by certain classes of supremely spiritual men; that it is so preserved today; that *The Secret Doctrine* presents many of the teachings of this primitive revelation, and that the whole of this revelation is within reach of those who will pass through the preparatory stages of purification and sacrifice.

More than that, many students of Theosophy hold that this primitive revelation was not a single, isolated event; but, rather, that we are in the presence of a progressive spiritual development. That the same Spirit of the Logos, having become incarnate in the beginning, appears again and again in incarnation, bringing life and immortality to light; and that the fundamental unity of all true religions springs from this unity of source.

Students of Theosophy will also agree with the view of Dr. Mills, that the whole process of evolution, from the beginning, has been marked by the interposition and guidance of intelligent spiritual powers; and the Catholic doctrine of the hierarchy of Angels, Principalities and Powers depicts just the kind of agency that students of Theosophy accept.

Students of Theosophy might be inclined to criticise the wording, rather than the general idea, of Dr. Mills' minor proposition and conclusion, which he states as follows:

"This enormous *separation* and subsequent *degeneration* give the lie to progressive evolutionism, but postulate the *sudden elevation* of the (human) species at the very commencement by a Power which is above and beyond all the forces of nature.

"Therefore: The earliest types of man can only be accounted for by the direct intervention of a *transcendent Power.*" (The italics are Dr. Mills'.)

This appears to us to mean that the Galley Hill and Piltdown races, or, perhaps, earlier ancestors of theirs, of the same general character, were not developed from some antecedent form (whether lower or

Digitized by Google

higher) but were "created," turned out ready-made, with the whole complicated apparatus of the vertebrate skeleton and physical organs complete. It is not altogether clear whether Dr. Mills accepts some form of evolution for animals, and particularly the other vertebrate types, all of which so closely correspond to the vertebrate frame of the human body. But Dr. Mills seems inclined to hold some such view, since he always sets the human and the non-human over against each other.

Here, perhaps, is the point at which *The Secret Doctrine* may offer the clues for which Dr. Mills is seeking.

We have already made it clear that *The Secret Doctrine,* which was published in 1888-89, has anticipated most of the conclusions reached by Dr. Mills thirty years later; and, in general, with the same purpose in view: to demonstrate the divine origin and spiritual life of mankind. But *The Secret Doctrine* further presents a solution of many difficulties into which, it seems to us, a thinker may be led, who presses too rigidly the conclusions expressed by Dr. Mills.

First: Is it necessary, or advisable, to postulate the appearance of the Galley Hill man ready-made, with all the infinite complexity of his vertebrate form and organs?

Second: Is it advisable to postulate this sudden appearance, and, at the same time, to think of the general vertebrate type, which corresponds bone for bone with the human skeleton, as having been slowly developed by evolution?

Third: Is it advisable to cut a chasm between the works of God and the works of Nature, with, let us say, the skeleton of man on the one side, and the almost precisely similar skeletal plan of the vertebrate animals on the other, saying that God made the one, and that Nature made the other; Nature, apparently, having perfected the vertebrate plan first?

Then there is the far deeper and more difficult question of consciousness. Dr. Mills appears to imply that the human consciousness is the direct creative work of God; while the consciousness, let us say, of birds, is the work of Nature. But the consciousness of birds contains many of the elements of understanding and feeling on which Dr. Mills relies to prove the spirituality of primitive man; for example, a high sex morality (in many species); devotion, to the point of complete self-sacrifice, to offspring; wonderfully artistic construction, for instance in the orioles; and, in so many of the thrush family, a gift for music which, outside humanity, has no parallel whatever in nature. Further, the birds appear to possess certain faculties, a certain gift with regard to space and time, which human beings in general cannot emulate, or even comprehend.

Is it, therefore, advisable to hold that Nature has, in the birds, produced this miracle of consciousness unaided, while nothing less than divine interposition will account for the similar consciousness in man?

Digitized by Google

Is it not wiser, more consistent and philosophical, to hold, as do many students of Theosophy, that God and Nature are not divided by a chasm; that Nature is God made manifest, the primal Divine Incarnation, and, therefore, the immeasurable initial Sacrifice? That God is in the truest sense immanent in Nature, in every atom or electron, which, therefore, thrills with spiritual life and potential consciousness; but that God is also Transcendent, eternal in the Heavens; that the Logos, the Mind of God, is no mere sum of the life of the electrons, but is a unitary Divine Consciousness, infinitely possessing Wisdom and Truth and Love, and working through Angels, Principalities and Powers at every point, in every atom of Nature, ceaselessly working for the redemption of all things, till all be perfected in the One?

Many students of Theosophy, therefore, believe in the spiritual character of every form of life, though, through misuse of free-will, that spirituality may be perverted and turned to evil; but at the same time believe in an orderly progression or development, in which not only the Galley Hill man but the orioles also have their spiritual part.

Dr. Mills affirms his belief in a primeval revelation. Many students of Theosophy, as has already been said, believe the same thing. And they are disposed to see, in the early chapters of Genesis, as in many other ancient Scriptures, clear echoes of that primeval revelation or newer unveilings from the same source.

The author of *The Secret Doctrine* has put forward the view that we have, in the first chapters of Genesis, a highly philosophical and scientific outline of the great process of development, as it in fact took place. The first chapter and the first three verses of the second chapter, the Elohistic portion, contains the broad outline of the whole process of evolution, perfected in seven great periods or Rounds, and having, as its goal, the development of spiritual man made perfect, an immortal archangel. The next portion, beginning with the fourth verse of the second chapter, the story of Adam and Eve, is, on the contrary, the description of the present period or Round, the fourth of the seven. And in this fourth period, Man is the first form to be developed on the earth, to be followed later by other animal forms.

But students of Theosophy do not picture to themselves the sudden appearance of, let us say, the Galley Hill man, with a ready-made complete vertebrate skeleton and a complex wealth of organs. That would seem somewhat abrupt and violent. Students of Theosophy think, rather, of a spiritual, almost an ideal form, becoming gradually more condensed and defined; a form that, at a certain stage, might almost be called semi-material and gelatinous; in which the pattern of the vertebrate skeleton (which had been worked out in an earlier world-period or Round) was gradually impressed and solidified.

It happens that this process can be well illustrated by certain facts observed in embryonic life. A quotation from C. W. Beebe's book, *The Bird*, will serve the purpose well:

Digitized by Google

"About the fourth day of incubation, sections of our embryo chick will show a low, rounded ridge, extending the whole length from the neck to the tail. While we can never be absolutely certain that perfect homology exists between the two (the chick and a generalized aquatic ancestor), yet it is very significant that soon after its development it dwindles away, leaving four conical, isolated buds—the beginnings of the limbs of the bird. Within two or three days after the appearance of the limbs, faint streaks become visible upon the tips of the extremities, and these hints of the bones of fingers and toes, for such they are, soon push out beyond the edge, still bound together by their transparent membrane, and for some time they present the appearance of webbed paws or radiate fins. But as early as the tenth day, except for the absence of feathers and claws, the limbs are, in appearance, very perfect wings and feet. The most interesting fact in connection with the limbs is that their development begins superficially and works inward, not, as would be thought, starting at the shoulder and ending at the digits. Even the deep-seated shoulder and thigh girdles of bone are not derived from the axial skeleton. The former, in the long ago, were pushed in from the surface. . . Up to about the twelfth day the tiny foreshadowings of bones are cartilaginous, like those of the shark, but at this time real osseous, or bony, tissue begins to be deposited in spots which spread rapidly. In the various portions of the skull these bony centres spread until the bones are separated only by narrow sutures, and in the adult bird even these are obliterated. . . " (Pages 473-75.)

This gives some idea of what we mean by the pattern of the vertebrate skeleton being gradually impressed on a being who was, first, ideal, then ethereal, then gradually solidifying through a stage which we have ventured to call gelatinous; and some such view as this is held by many students of Theosophy. Here is the great curve of degeneration, the Descent into Matter, a part of which Dr. Mills has clearly seen and has illustrated by his diagrams. For this gradual solidification and definition, we must allow several million years, at the end of which will appear such a type as the Galley Hill man, to whom we have tentatively assigned an antiquity of a million years or more.

But the development of the chick serves also to illustrate something else: First, the impressing of the generalized vertebrate pattern on soft, gelatinous material; then the specialization of this general form into that of a biped with feathers, and, in particular, the specific form of the barndoor fowl.

Many students of Theosophy think of the development of vertebrate life as following some such course as this: first the impressing of the general plan, the idea, so to speak, on a semi-ethereal body which gradually passed through a gelatinous stage to one of full solidity; then the specialization of the one general pattern into the numberless forms of vertebrate life. Man retains the general form; animals, birds and other vertebrates are the specializations. In this sense, man stands at the

Digitized by Google

beginning of this period of life; and it is easy to understand why his form is practically unchanged in a million years, while *Elephas meridionalis* has been succeeded by *Elephas antiquus*, this in turn making way for *Elephas primigenius*, the mammoth, now extinct, and replaced by living elephants; so that, of the characteristic animals which surrounded this early man, not one now survives, while his form remains unchanged.

And many students of Theosophy, who trace the history of man thus downward from an angelic being, are persuaded that we have reached the midpoint of the curve; they think of a long progression in the future, through such stages as Saint Paul has called the psychical body and the spiritual body, returning once more to the angel, but an angel redeemed, enriched by age-long experience, purified by suffering and sacrifice.

Dr. Mills has, with endless patience and intuitive insight, reached some of the conclusions which were given to the world more than thirty years ago, in *The Secret Doctrine*. He has patiently and painfully put together a number of the pieces of the great Chinese puzzle; is it too much to expect that he may now turn to the pattern, and see how the whole picture is completed? Should he do this, we can promise him that the solution of many enigmas will be there to his hand; the conflict between science and religion will cease to exist, reconciled and harmonized in a science which is deeply religious, in a view of religion which is at the same time profoundly scientific.

* * * * * * * * *

That long conflict drew its force from the materialism of science, on the one hand, and from the dogmatism, the intolerant spirit, of religion, on the other. From the standpoint of Theosophy, it may be said in parenthesis, science which is materialistic is no true science, and religion which is intolerant is no true religion.

It is, therefore, with sincere happiness that students of Theosophy, the Spirit of Reconciliation, are able to recognize so much true and wise tolerance in the conclusions of the recent Lambeth Conference. As a main result of this Conference, the "Archbishops and Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church in full communion with the Church of England, two hundred and fifty-two in number," have put forth an Encyclical Letter, which breathes the spirit of brotherly love. Perhaps the most distinctive passage is this:

"The secret of life is fellowship. So men feel, and it is true. But fellowship with God is the indispensable condition of human fellowship. The secret of life is the double fellowship, fellowship with God and with man. . . "

Since the principal object of The Theosophical Society is "to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour," it is with the utmost interest

Digitized by Google

that students of Theosophy look for the applications, in the recent Encyclical, of this doctrine of fellowship.

There is, first, the difference of creed. What has the Encyclical to say concerning the principles here? Perhaps this passage will answer the question:

"In the past, negotiations for reunion [of Christian Churches] have often started with the attempt to define the measure of uniformity which is essential. The impression has been given that nothing else matters. Now we see that those elements of truth about which differences have arisen are essential to the fulness of the witness of the whole Church. We have no need to belittle what is distinctive in our own interpretation of Christian life; we believe that it is something precious which we hold in trust for the common good. We desire that others should share in our heritage and our blessings, as we wish to share in theirs. It is not by reducing the different groups of Christians to uniformity, but by rightly using their diversity that the Church can become all things to all men. So long as there is vital connection with the Head, there is positive value in the differentiation of the members."

The key sentence here: "not by reducing the different groups to uniformity, but by rightly using their diversity," is an admirable presentation of a principle which has been set forth times without number by students of Theosophy.

So much for difference of creed. Concerning difference of sex, the Encyclical Letter has equally wise words of counsel: "It is the peculiar gifts and the special excellence of women which the Church will most wish to use. Its wisdom will be shown, not in disregarding, but in taking advantage of, the differences between women and men." Here again is what we have long been accustomed to call the distinctively Theosophical principle: not unison, but harmony.

As to difference of race, there is this passage in the Encyclical:

"We cannot believe that the effect of the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth will be to abolish nations. Holy Scripture emphasizes the value of national life and indicates its permanence. The sense of nationality seems to be a natural instinct. The love which Christ pours into the hearts that are His, makes men cease to hate each other because they belong to different nations. Within redeemed humanity nations will not cease to exist, but nationality itself will be redeemed."

Students of Theosophy would, perhaps, be inclined to say that nationality is not so much "a natural instinct" as the expression of the differing rays of the Logos; therefore as inherent as the difference between the notes of the gamut and between the colours; and, like these, rendering possible a harmony of tones or colours that would otherwise have no existence. But, in general, this presentation of nationality is in harmony with the first principle of The Theosophical Society.

One point we should like to underline. The Letter says: "The love which Christ pours into the hearts that are His, makes men cease to

Digitized by Google

hate each other because they belong to different nations." Students of Theosophy might be inclined to press the principle further, and to say that there is true nationality only when the hearts of a nation are receptive to that Divine Light; that there are counterfeit nationalisms inspired not by Divine Light but by egotism and vanity; and that, being no true nations, they have no true title to national life, nor any true claim to associate themselves with the real nations. This may have a bearing on two things: the movement called Sinn Fein, and the admission of Germany into the League of Nations, for which the Encyclical pleads, but which by no means commends itself to students of Theosophy, so long as Germany remains unrepentant; and students of Theosophy will believe Germany repentant only after she has made the utmost possible reparation, instead of shirking and lying and breaking her pledged word. We doubt whether, in any branch of any Church, there is provision for the absolution of unrepented sin; and we are convinced that condoning of unrepented sin makes one participant in that sin.

So far as the difference of caste, or class, is concerned, we cannot express such complete sympathy with the expressions of the Letter. The distinctive sentences are these:

"The Church will, for instance, maintain that fellowship is endangered if all who serve do not share equitably in the results of labour. For this is part of Christian justice. The Church will fearlessly claim that the human character of every worker is more sacred than his work; that his worth as a child of God and a member of the fellowship must not be forgotten, or imperilled by any form of industrial slavery. . . "

We have no criticism of what is here said, except it be that the most painful toil, and even slavery itself, may bear excellent fruit in Christian character. A man need not stop work in order to cultivate his soul; on the contrary, his soul is in far more danger, just because he has stopped work. We suggest an ancient verse concerning mischief and idle hands; nothing at all is said about busy hands, even the busy hands of a slave.

But we do criticise seriously, not what is said, but what is omitted. Surely, one of the gravest moral dangers of humanity, and in a special way, of England is, not any oppression of capital, but the heavy, blind, brutal tyranny of "Labour." We conceive that the Church of Christ is more menaced there than it has ever been by any conditions of hardship whatever. And, to speak quite frankly, we feel that there is a certain cowardice, a certain temporizing, politic timidity, or, what is, perhaps, more dangerous, a thorough-going blindness to the realities of the case, in this silence.

It is of particular interest to students of Theosophy to find that Theosophy and The Theosophical Society have had careful consideration by the Lambeth Conference; or, to speak more accurately, that such has been the intention.

Digitized by Google

It is a fair guess that the Archbishops and Bishops, two hundred and fifty-two in number, will be somewhat taken aback to be told that, on the one hand, the spirit of The Theosophical Society is admirably, though not completely, expressed throughout the Encyclical Letter; and, on the other, that nowhere, perhaps, will certain strictures which they have passed on Theosophy, as they conceive it, be so heartily welcomed and warmly appreciated as by many readers of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

What the Conference has to say, is this:

"The Conference, while recognizing that the three publicly stated objects of The Theosophical Society do not in themselves appear to be inconsistent with loyal membership of the Church, expresses its conviction that there are cardinal elements in the positive teaching current in theosophical circles and literature which are irreconcilable with the Christian faith, and warns Christian people who may be induced to make a study of Theosophy by the seemingly Christian elements contained in it to be on their guard against the ultimate bearing of theosophical teaching, and to examine strictly the character and credentials of the teachers upon whose authority they are encouraged or compelled to rely."

Many readers of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, as has been said, will welcome this pronouncement most sincerely. It is simply a repetition of what has been said, over and over again, in these pages. For the only body known to the Conference appears to be the Adyar Society; and its leaders, in the view of many who read THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, parted company with the genuine principles and practice of Theosophy twenty-five years ago.

We record with profound sympathy the paragraph which follows:

"The Conference, believing that the attraction of Theosophy for some Christian people lies largely in its presentation of Christian faith as a quest for knowledge, recommends that in the current teaching of the Church due regard should be given to the mystical elements of faith and life which underlie the historic belief of Christendom."

That is a good and fruitful quest. It is exactly what many students of Theosophy have been doing for many years.

How should you be a lamp when you yield no light to what is close besides you?—AKHLAQ-I JALALI.

Digitized by Google

FRAGMENTS

THERE is but one way,—the way of self-forgetfulness, and devotion to the interests of others. Without this, as a perpetually animating spirit, joys may easily become snares.

From any joy be always detached; in any joy be always recollected.

Let all joy be in and through me. In my keeping it is safe; in your own it will be lost.

To walk safely, be secure in the purity and honesty of your intention, and seek perpetually how you may help and serve and minister to the interests and pleasures of others, with no single thought of your own. If you live from minute to minute with such intention, you can make no mistake, there will be no danger, and the work entrusted to you will prosper, since I will keep and guide it. If in the smallest detail it slips from my hand, there lies the danger,—as one stitch dropped can unravel the whole.

You must bear with cheerful patience whatever else may be put upon you. Sin must be purged, and that means sorrow. Pain and sacrifice make atonement for past wrong. Accept as from my hand each deprivation; there shall not be one feather's weight more than must be, and every blessing you make possible, or have made, I shall give.

Failure is an illusion, like all other illusions, one of the snares of Mara. Its consciousness pertains only to the four worlds, and it fades to nothingness at the entrance to the higher three. No breath of its cold blight touches the Immortal Dweller in those regions. Keep steadfast in that faith. Set it as a torch upon the pathway of your life.

It has been said that Buddha climbed into heaven upon the shoulders of a million men. This is one expression of Brotherhood, and of the obligations entailed by it, too seldom or inadequately understood. That

Digitized by Google

I stand where I stand to-day, I owe but in small part to myself. Myriads of beings on all planes have contributed to make me what I am, physically, mentally, morally. Many are quite unconscious of the fact,—as unconscious as I. Others have deliberately and of free choice given of their best—or sacrificed—for me, stepping from sunshine into shadow to make room for my more pressing need.

Bound together, part and parcel each of the other's success or failure, we grow and evolve as others help us to make possible; as we, in turn, make possible their evolution. That I have not yet opened that door ahead of me, upon whose handle, perchance, my uncertain fingers have lain these many years, hesitating, timid,—how many, guess you, have been obliged to wait, a tedious or painful wait, before entering a further room of better light and truer freedom and wider outlook? That fault I have struggled with in part, but which is still unconquered,—the fate of how many, may be, is hanging in the balance of my victory or defeat?

And this is true of souls in all stages of evolution; we confine our responsibilities and gratitude far too much to human kind. Brotherhood knows no such distinctions, but runs freely through all kingdoms, from tiniest atom to highest, intangible being. The whole universe is different that I live. So the great question confronts us,—*how* is it different? That is what we must ask ourselves, seeking if we may discover the means whereby to prove an endless blessing throughout the seven worlds, a benefactor in the highest, purest sense.

The secret of this tangled, bewildering, painful life is the inner life—the religious life; and the secret of the religious life is love. Great saints carry us still further into the depths of these mysteries, telling us what sometimes seems difficult of comprehension, that the heart of it all is joy, and bliss unspeakable. O marvel of marvels! toward which we grope in our blindness, reaching out longing hands, straining our weary steps. For this unfailing testimony through all the ages awakens a hope as immortal as its source.

CAVÉ.

Digitized by Google

WILLIAM BLAKE

"Those who break Nature's laws lose their physical health; those who break the laws of the inner life lose their psychic health."

—Light on the Path.

"We are the richer, but they [poets & artists] are the poorer. They should have sealed their lips, guarding the vision in their hearts till they had wrought it into the fabric of their lives."

—The Song of Life.

WILLIAM BLAKE'S name has some of the fascination of the "untravelled world whose margin fades for ever and for ever" from the sight. One finds apt quotations from his writings in almost every essay or book that treats of mysticism. Anthologies reprint lovely and suggestive poems over his name. Authors who stand at extremes of the temperamental range, from exuberant and exaggerating Swinburne to judicial Miss Underhill, praise him in various manners and degrees. The cumulative effect of such mention of an author who is otherwise unknown, is that we receive an impression of rich, unexplored country. But if one sets out to explore, the margin fades. First, the books are not easily accessible; they did not find publishers during Blake's lifetime. The most important of them (according to Blake's opinion) were for the first time published in ordinary type, so recently as 1904—a whole century after they were written. While there are earlier editions than that of 1904, those earlier printings are facsimiles of script—attractive (and expensive) for collectors, but for practical use, illegible. A curious explorer who persists beyond the first obstacle of inaccessible books, faces, next, the difficulty of writings that are not to be read by him who runs. The explorer does not skim neat sentences—it seems as if the apt quotations and the charming verse of the anthologies contained all the gold—he encounters forbidding heaps like the desolate accumulation of rubbish outside a slate quarry. The average explorer turns back from Blake's untravelled world, and contents himself with information at second hand.

But bolder navigators are advancing. A hundred years ago, when Blake's voluminous manuscripts came into the hands of his executor, that executor burned them, convinced that they contained harmful teachings. Now, conditions have so changed that a vogue of Blake may be possible. Two facts might make him popular. First, he writes in "free-verse."[1] Second, he paints and writes about spiritualistic or psychical subjects; he drew portraits of the spirits who visited him in his rooms—his writings were

[1] The well known anthology poems in conventional metre are lapses from his customary form.

Digitized by Google

taken down in dictation from spirits. A year or so ago, a Blake exhibition was held in New York. Art Museums, in Boston and elsewhere, are collecting his works. Two editors, Ellis and Yeats, the latter, at one time, an avid student of theosophical writings, have expounded, by aid of the *Secret Doctrine,* Blake's elaborate symbology. Certain literary coteries—Swinburne and the Pre-Raphaelites, made a fad of Blake. From a fad, he may become a temporary idol; he may be regarded as another prophet unhonoured in his own generation, a neglected forerunner of Conan Doyle and Oliver Lodge.

Blake was born in 1757 and died in 1827. He was able to work until his death. His period of productivity thus covers two different cycles, and two generations of men. He worked in the last quarter of the 18th century—the cycle of Cagliostro and St. Martin. He sympathized with the political ambitions of the French Revolution. In the opening cycle of the 19th century, he outlived Byron, Shelley and Keats.

His thought, in its general course, is a curious blend of tendencies from each cycle and generation. Though he abetted the 18th century revolutionary movement, on its political side, to the point of intimate friendship with Priestley and Paine, there is no superlative that would exaggerate his detestation of its anti-Christian nature. He traced backwards the religion of the Revolution—Deism and "Natural Religion"—through Locke, Newton and Bacon. Those three names recur as a refrain through his philosophical writing—a refrain of anathema; sometimes he adds to them, singly or combined, Gibbon, Hume, Voltaire, Rousseau. He held up against their anti-Christian dogmas not only the Christ of history but the Living Christ. He believed it possible to meet the Living Christ face to face in the world. He made a transition, by that positive belief, from the negative scepticism of the 18th century to the constructive philosophy of the 19th century poets. Like these latter, he saw the imaginative faculty as a saving spiritual element in man; and in his elaborate symbolical system, he recognizes correspondence between that faculty of man and Christ. With these positive convictions, he nevertheless held certain private interpretations that greatly restrict his understanding of Christian history—such as on the Passion and Death of Christ—that they represent a certain weakness of Christ's human nature, rather than triumphant victory. While he partakes of the constructive work of the new generation, his true position is transitional.

The new poetry of Blake's time ("Tintern Abbey" and "Adonais" fairly represent it) seems *tabula rasa,* so far as no explicit or implicit mention is made of doctrines hitherto taught as specifically Christian. But such clearing of the surface worked advantageously in the end, and forced a re-statement of convictions that were deeply felt. The result in the poetry itself was a new (Blake had very little share in this achievement) and fresh understanding of the universe—as the One Life in many lives—the old understanding of the Upanishads. That

Digitized by Google

new interpretation of life, and new understanding of nature, was perhaps one of the gifts to the new century from the Lodge Messenger of 1775. And the result for the poets themselves, as in the case of Keats, was such a deepening appreciation of the One Life in many lives, as to lead almost to the discovery of the possibility of discipleship.

Blake's father was a very poor man, and Blake was one of several children. He was trained to earn his living as an engraver on copper. And, as he showed facility with the pencil, he was given lessons in art, also. In addition to copying upon copper for his livelihood the pictures of others, he began to make sketches and designs of his own, and also to write verse. Occupation with art brought about friendship with John Flaxman, a sculptor of the Canova, pseudo-classicist type. Flaxman's name is seldom heard now, but in the period of 1800 he was much honoured as a successful illustrator of Pope's Homer. Interest in art was not the sole bond holding Flaxman and Blake. Both were admirers of Swedenborg, whose writings appeared in English translation soon after their author's death in 1772. Flaxman was a thorough-going adherent, while Blake accepted Swedenborg with reservations. Though Flaxman was only two years older than Blake, he had the prestige of growing success, and generously tried in many ways, for many years, to advance Blake's interests. First, he introduced Blake to some literary people, at whose soirées, Blake sang his verses to tunes of his own improvisation. As a novelty, Blake lasted long enough with this "set," for their leader, jointly with Flaxman, to bear the expense of putting through the press some of his youthful poems. These poems attracted no notice whatever. By 1789, Blake had written more verse—those known as *Songs of Innocence,* and containing the best of all his poems, the sweet, naïve, and devout "Little lamb, who made thee?" Blake was perplexed about how to get these published. With the utter failure of the first volume, he had ended as a "nine days' wonder" with the literary coterie. He had no money, and no friend among publishers. In this perplexity, one night while asleep, his brother, Robert Blake, who had recently died (and who, William said, continued to visit and converse with him every day) came to him, and suggested a way out of the difficulty. The way suggested was a perfectly natural one, although slow and laborious. Robert Blake pointed out that his brother need have no dealings with printers and publishers. He could take small pieces of copper plate, and engrave his verses, just as visiting cards and invitations are engraved. Blake did so, surrounding the verses with ornamental borders and designs. After he had printed from the engraved plates, St. Joseph came, according to Blake, and showed him how to fill in the designs and background with water-colour paints.

By this slow and tedious method, Blake published a few years later, 1794, a second small collection of verse, *Songs of Experience,* containing the often quoted Tiger poem—"Tiger, Tiger, burning bright"; and by that same laborious process, he put forth his writings until his death.

Digitized by Google

There was one exception. A publisher did undertake one poem on *The French Revolution,* as anything upon that subject seemed promising at a time when England was full of applause for the new movement in France. But Blake never carried it beyond the first section.

The *Songs of Experience* are Blake's last literary work. From 1790 onwards, he was engaged upon his so-called Books of Prophecy or Books of Vision, political, philosophical, religious, and cosmological treatises, set forth through complex symbology. Some of the titles are: *Tiriel, Thel, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Daughters of Albion, Urizen, Ahania, Los, Vala.* These culminate in what he considered his most important writings, *Jerusalem* and *Milton.* The "Prophetic Books" are brief—from three to twenty octavo pages of ordinary print. The *Milton* and the *Jerusalem* are very much longer. The composition, engraving, and colouring of these writings was done in whatever leisure he had (often abundant) from his occupation of engraving for the trade. How slowly the process of engraving his manuscripts proceeded, is revealed by the dates of the *Jerusalem.* The date *engraved* on the title page is 1804. But the date *water-marked* in the paper on which Blake printed from the plates, is 1820. That means it took him sixteen years to make the plates for this single writing.

As Blake was in the business, the purchase of copper plate required comparatively slight capital. Once the plates were made, they eked out his income, which was always meagre. From time to time one of his few friends would order a coloured copy of some book—either moved by genuine interest or by charity; if the latter, generously concealing a gift under the name of an order. Blake furnished a list of prices to enquirers for copies. The prices range from £3 to £10. The copies are reported as of varying value, dependent upon the mood,—the care and enthusiasm—in which Blake made them. The copies were not numerous, and are now *objets de luxe.* Facsimile reproductions, in colour, have been made of some. The New York Public Library owns some of Blake's own hand-coloured copies, and some facsimiles.

At the same time that Blake was engraving for the trade, and doing his writing and private engraving, he was also drawing and painting pictures of all kinds. Most of these went to friends who would generously commission him to prepare ten or more pictures; these pictures were paid for in advance, and Blake was given his own time for their completion. The circumstances of his life were so hard that he often had to solicit a second advance from his patrons while still in arrears with his payment.

There was a definite purpose in all this labour and this life of poverty. It was to further "the interest of true religion and science."[2] In carrying out his purpose, his plan of action was not unlike Madame

[2] In a letter of 1802, Blake writes: "The thing I have most at heart—more than life, or all that seems to make life comfortable without—is the interest of true religion and science. And whenever anything appears to affect that interest (especially if I myself omit any duty to my station as a soldier of Christ), it gives me the greatest of torments."

Digitized by Google

Blavatsky's. He struck hard blows at the false religion and false science then current, and after that attack upon the Church, and upon the enemies of the Church, he built up his own system of religion and science unified. Naturally, he shocked the orthodox, when he stoutly declared that "being good" would get no man into Heaven. He had grasped a commonplace of the East, the idea of "pairs of opposites"—"being good" and "being bad" are only one such pair. That idea was entirely foreign to the West, and when Blake vehemently denounced the false asceticism which masks as piety, he was in turn denounced as an extreme radical. He was not a radical at all. He was declaring the truth—that Heaven is not won by negativeness, but is taken by violence. "The treasures of heaven are not negations of passion but realities of intellect . . . The fool shall not enter into heaven, be he ever so holy." Blake's attack upon orthodox ecclesiasticism can be found in most of his productions,—flippantly, in the doggerel verses of *Songs of Experience:*

Dear mother, dear mother, the Church is cold
But the ale-house is healthy and pleasant and warm.

His object was too serious, however, for him to endanger it by frequent use of such a method. His more usual attitude is shown in a conversation quoted by Mr. H. Crabb Robinson, the lawyer friend of the artists and literary people of the day: "I have much intercourse," Blake said, "with Voltaire, and he said to me: 'I blasphemed the Son of Man, and it shall be forgiven me, but they [Voltaire's enemies] blasphemed the Holy Ghost in me, and it shall not be forgiven them'."[3] Blake's concentrated attack is to be found in verse called "The Everlasting Gospel." Irony and sarcasm abound. His sallies admit explanation which take much of the sting out of them. But no explanations are published with his words, and their sharp crudity is meant to outrage. The poem is introduced thus:

The vision of Christ that thou dost see
Is my vision's greatest enemy;
Thine is the Friend of all mankind,
Mine speaks in parables to the blind.

Then in half a dozen sections Blake scores some of the virtues prized by Pharisees and orthodox, and shows that Christ's life went counter to every one of these distorted virtues. First, Blake ridicules gentleness.

Was Jesus gentle, or did He
Give any marks of gentility?
When twelve years old He ran away
And left His parents in dismay.
"No earthly parents I confess—
My Heavenly Father's business."

[3] Robinson continues the conversation thus: "I asked in what language Voltaire spoke. His answer was ingenious, and gave no encouragement to cross-questioning: 'To my sensations it was English. It was like the touch of a musical key; he touched it probably French, but to my ear it became English.'"

Digitized by Google

Next, Blake pours contempt upon perverted notions of humility.

> Was Jesus humble? or did He
> Give any proofs of humility?
> If He had been anti-Christ, creeping Jesus,
> He'd have done anything to please us;
> Gone sneaking into synagogues,
> And not used the elders and priests like dogs;
> But, humble as a lamb or ass,
> Obeyed Himself to Caiaphas.
> God wants not man to humble himself.

He concludes "The Everlasting Gospel" with this couplet,

> I am sure this Jesus will not do
> Either for Englishman or Jew.

Duly considered, Blake's attacks do no more harm than to shock the "being good" type of religion. If he had stopped merely with attack, it would be harmful. But he built up a construction to replace the valueless things he tried to overturn.

Yet Blake did not ally himself with the philosophers and economists who were the outspoken enemies of orthodoxy. He censured them even more sharply than he had done the ecclesiastics, and shows what a narrow range their blind materialism has. "He never can be a friend to the human race who is the preacher of natural morality or natural religion. You, O Deists! are the enemies of the human race and of universal nature." He calls the scientist gods of the eighteenth century—Newton, Bacon, Locke—devils in disguise, and the instruments of devils. Their materialism is a pall of blight, smothering humanity.

> Bacon and Newton, sheathed in dismal steel, their terrors hang
> Like iron scourges over Albion.
> I turn my eyes to the schools and universities of Europe,
> And there behold the loom of Locke, whose woof rages dire,
> Washed by the water-wheels of Newton: black the cloth,
> In heavy wreaths, folds over every nation.

Combatting the dogmas of the material scientists and philosophers, Blake maintained, with the authority of personal experience, that life is not a small thing of the physical perceptions, but that there are finer and finer forms of substance interpenetrating the gross matter of the physical plane. These finer grades of matter are the more solid as they are more remote in essence from physical matter. He declared also that those planes of finer substance are not cloudlands but countries in "stronger and better light" than earth; their inhabitants have stronger and better "lineaments than the eye can see." Blake drew portraits of men from those worlds who frequently sat in his study. He pushed his attack against the pseudo-scientists to the last point by reiterating emphatically

Digitized by Google

that those higher worlds, which are perceived by inner senses, and their inhabitants, are not vapours, but organisms minutely constructed; the spiritual beings who conversed with him were not ghosts, but "organized men."

In his constructive work, Blake takes religion and science out of their antagonistic position, and brings them together in mutual support. To religion he wished to give a scientific, metaphysical basis; to science a spiritual goal, in seeking out the nature and laws of inner worlds. His constructive work is done by means of a vast allegory, parts of which extend through practically all the "Prophetic Books." The purpose of the allegory is clearest in the two long books, *Jerusalem* and *Milton*.

Meditating upon the spurious religion and the spurious science of the world, and man's helplessness with those "blind mouths," Blake, claiming to be taught from Heaven,[4] undertakes to point man the way out of the dark forest, as Dante and other poets and seers have done. He makes a giant, Albion, by name, represent man or humanity. The giant's stature suggests the vast potentialities locked up in human nature. But, notwithstanding his divine potentialities (Albion is the Divine Image), this giant of immense strength has become the prisoner and slave of a pale Spectre. To Blake, the word Spectre, was sufficiently descriptive and connotative. He did not feel the need of any other name to symbolize the rationalising powers of the mind which are "the slayer of the real." To the physical body in which Albion is clothed, Blake gives a fitting symbol, "the Shadow." Albion's duty is "to slay the slayer," and to awake to his real consciousness,—out of the dream of elemental consciousness into his true humanity which is an image of the divine.

Each man is in his Spectre's power
Until the arrival of that hour,
When his humanity awake
And cast his Spectre into the lake.

Albion was enslaved by the Spectre when the Spectre captured and demolished his chief citadel, Jerusalem. The name, Jerusalem, symbolizes the spiritual imagination,—the faculty in man which images divine truths and realities. It emanates from the Divine Image, Albion; and Blake calls it, in opposition to the Spectre, the Emanation. It is the city of the great King, "the temple not made with hands," the place where Albion meets his Creator,—where man attains to union. To free himself, Albion must upbuild again that fortress. The struggle before him is age-long, and must be repeated again and again, on many planes. An Arjuna brood of "fathers and grandfathers, instructors, uncles, brothers,

[4] "I am under the direction of messengers from heaven, daily and nightly."—from a letter to his friend, Butts.

"I have written this poem (*Milton* and *Jerusalem*) from immediate dictation, twelve or sometimes twenty or thirty lines at a time, without premeditation, and even against my will."—Letter to Butts.

Digitized by Google

sons" is ranged in this fratricidal strife. When man shall gain the final victory, he will have won a share in his triumph not only for all of humanity, but for all the lives below the human level.

> All human forms identified, even tree, metal, earth and stone; all
> Human forms identified, living, going forth and returning wearied
> Into the planetary lives of years, months, days, and hours; reposing
> And then awaking into His bosom in the life of immortality.

As in all symbolic writings, the allegory is not a tissue of a single thread, but a fabric intricately interwoven. The *Divine Comedy* and the *Faerie Queene* are stories that weave together individual, national, historical, and religious meanings. So, too, with Blake. Albion stands, also, for enslaved England, which Blake would like to see transformed into the new Jerusalem, the bride of the King. The crossing threads of the allegory need not in any way interfere with one another—the varied colours of a rich brocade do not. It is usually clear which is for the moment on the surface, as in the following beautiful lyric.

> And did those feet [Christ's] in ancient time
> Walk upon England's mountains green?
> And was the holy Lamb of God
> On England's pleasant pastures seen?
>
> And did the Countenance Divine
> Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
> And was Jerusalem builded here
> Among these dark Satanic mills?
>
> Bring me my bow of burning gold!
> Bring me my arrows of desire!
> Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
> Bring me my chariot of fire!
>
> I will not cease from mental fight,
> Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant land.

Blake has made a distinguished, if not unique place for himself in English letters, by his sight into some of the laws of Life and the lives. Western materialism blinds and blurs; and if it is suggested to an average man that he is not his physical body, he is made very uncomfortable and regards his informant as an unpleasant individual. Blake caught the Eastern idea of hierarchies of life—of sub-human levels and super-human, also. He caught the Eastern and Christian ideal of union,—after faithful effort to follow a Master's life. There is a wide chasm

Digitized by Google

between his rock-truths of science and religion, and the dry sand of his contemporaries. Blake is one of the very few occultists in English letters. There are mystics, like Edmund Burke, a contemporary of Blake,—but what a distance between an intuitional mystic and a scientific occultist! Blake's place is not unique, because a predecessor, William Law, has the rare distinction of being an English occultist. Law, it will be remembered, learned his science from a study of Jacob Boehme's theosophical writings. Blake, too, studied Boehme, but has not indicated the extent of his indebtedness.

The scarcity of occultists in English writers shows what an important service Blake might have rendered to the English speaking world. William Law is a bridge of approach toward occultism for those who come from the side of orthodoxy. Blake might be an approach for those who are outside the religious fold. His poems drew admiration from his young contemporaries, like Wordsworth. With his scientific bent, Blake might have put into scientific expression those profound truths which the poets set forth afresh in their verse,—truths which the average reader disregards with nonchalance as abstract speculations. The cause of the Lodge might thus have been greatly advanced. But there are serious faults in the carrying out of Blake's worthy purpose,—faults so grave as to raise doubt about the value of all he has done.

His program, "to open the blind eyes and to bring out the prisoners from the prison," implies some degree of approach toward coöperation with the Master, toward discipleship. And that, in turn, implies some measure of humility. Realization of his own helplessness and his total dependence upon the Master is not wanting, as the following lines from *Jerusalem* evidence:—

> I rest not from my great task:
> To open the eternal worlds! To open the immortal eyes
> Of man inwards; into the worlds of thought: into eternity
> Ever expanding in the bosom of God, the human imagination.
> O Saviour! pour upon me thy spirit of meekness and love.
> Annihilate selfhood in me! Be thou all my life!

On the other hand, the responsibility of coöperation with the Master, conscious or unconscious, is likely in reaction to provoke human vanity. Of this likewise we should expect Blake to have an ample human share. But did he have an abnormal share, which cancels his credit of humility, and renders his contribution to humanity, not only zero, but, worse than zero, an influence for harm?

On Flaxman's authority, we have an estimate of Blake's pictorial work in his younger days by a contemporary of note, a great portraitist: "Romney," wrote Flaxman, "thinks his [Blake's] historical drawings rank with those of Michelangelo." One knows how easy it is, in casual conversation, in a book-shop or gallery, to express an opinion which one would not care to maintain formally. The circumstances in which

Digitized by Google

Romney spoke would have to be known before his meaning and intention could become clear. Sir Joshua Reynolds, another portraitist, told Blake, in conversation, "to work with less extravagance and more simplicity, and to correct his drawing." Blake threw the latter opinion aside, and disliked Reynolds for the rest of his life. Romney's flattering comparison sank into his vanity, germinated, and sprouted a tree of strange fruit. We find Blake all through his life putting himself in the company of the Renaissance Italians, as of their rank. In a letter to the friend and patron, Mr. Butts, who for several years bought whatever Blake painted, he says: "The pictures which I painted for you are equal in every part of the art, and superior in one, to anything that has been done since the age of Raphael. . . . I also know and understand and can assuredly affirm, that the works I have done for you are equal to the Caracci or Raphael (and I am now some years older than Raphael was when he died). I say they are equal to Caracci or Raphael." That would seem a superlative degree of egotism. He goes beyond that, however, in declaring: "I am more famed in Heaven for my works than I could well conceive. In my brain are studies and chambers filled with books and pictures of old, which I wrote and painted in ages of eternity before my mortal life; and those works are the delight and study of the archangels. Why then should I be anxious about the riches or fame of mortality?" It is wrong to call this quotation egotism. It is brain sickness. It shows a crossing of the boundary line between madness and sanity. Blake travelled back and forth across that line all his life.

Only a trained psychiatrist can trace the demarcation line of sanity. But we can see in Blake tendencies to unrestraint which might lead to complete unbalancing. Tatham, one of the biographers, writes: "Blake despised restraints and rules so much that his father dared not send him to school." His marriage in 1782 is a strange piece of impulsiveness. He was in love with a girl who was indifferent to his attentions. His disappointment one day, brought an expression of regret to the lips of a second girl who was standing by. Blake immediately turned to the second, saying, "You are sorry for me—then, I love you." They were shortly married. She proved an adoring creature, serving him devotedly until his death, even learning to colour his books for him.

Some persons are born exaggerators. In their colour scale, red equals normal grey. One learns to calculate their hyperboles. Others are born psychics. They see every movement of their own emotion and every mental process as a prompting from outside,—and usually the prompting comes from people of distinction. A line of old poetry passing through a psychic's head might be described as the old poet himself holding up his volume and with dramatic gesture pointing to the lines which at that moment come back in memory. One learns to normalize the psychic's experience. Many of Blake's queer expressions could be explained as ordinary exaggeration and psychism. At some point in psychism, if it be continuous and extreme, delusion begins. The deluded

Digitized by Google

person is convinced of the actuality of experiences which an outsider knows to be untrue. Blake suffered from the delusions of insanity. He was a psychic, a medium, and, therefore, undoubtedly saw swarms of figures in the psychic regions, but when he insisted upon his identification of those psychic forms, he was deluded and insane. When he was four years old, he saw God, he maintained. No one would be willing to say that the God of Blake's pictures expresses a sane man's ideas of the Absolute. Milton, Blake said, was sent down from the plane of discarnate spirits, to assist Blake in his difficulties, and also to correct errors in his own religious views. The prophet Ezekiel was another of Blake's visitants. Blake was sane in asserting the actuality of the psychic experience. He was insane in acting upon deluded interpretation of that experience. Saints are warned against trusting their visions—old teachers declare that one of the devil's favourite tricks is to dress himself up as an angel of light. Poor Blake was a victim of the old prank. His "spiritual visions" are such exceedingly unpleasant things, like bad dreams. He called them saints and angels, but we turn from them instinctively.

Beauty is almost lacking in his work, written and painted. As a writer, his literary career ended with the *Songs of Experience.* In the present article, lyrics are quoted from the "Prophetic Books." These lovely lyrics are accidental—a momentary lapse from the "free-verse" he adopted as the best medium of expression for his allegorical and cosmological views. His most important books, *Jerusalem* and *Milton,* he thought, were dictated to him by heavenly visitants,—so many lines a day. Blake said those two works were the greatest poems in the world. A brief summary has been given of the purport of the books. A reader would arrive at that summary with difficulty, because the two works, and the other "Prophetic Books" sprawl in incoherence. An irreverent and punning critic who liked the story of the *Faerie Queene* but was bored by the moral teachings, said of the allegory: "The alligator will not bite you, if you do not trouble it." His irreverence embodies a principle. The great poets constructed their poems as life is constructed. One can see life either as a succession of incidents, or as significant opportunities for discipline and instruction. One can read the *Divine Comedy* or *Pilgrim's Progress* merely for the story, or can make personal application of what he reads. The point is that the creative artist has constructed the poem in planes, as man is constructed; the poem is a true likeness of life. One can choose his plane; but in a great poem, all are there completely. This is what is meant in criticism by the technical word "verisimilitude." A writer can take a wholly imaginary person as the hero of his drama. But to that imaginary man, the dramatist must give the brain and heart, weakness and strength of an actual man. The imagined creature must be a very likeness of a real man. In Blake there is no verisimilitude. There is no human Arjuna, whose irresolution and mixed motives hold our sympathetic attention. There is only the alligator that bites. The "Prophetic Books" are a cipher, not an allegory. One

Digitized by Google

has to use a code to unravel who and what are the names that recur: Enitharmon, Bowlahoola, Golgonooza, Thammaz, Orc, Sol, Luvah, Ahania. They stand for persons and places. But they have no more life than a genealogical tree. They have no more individuality than the figures in Blake's pictures.

As a literary man, Blake's status is not likely to change permanently. He is an anthology poet. He has no whole to offer,—only extracts. This is true of his pictorial work also. Small bits of it are pleasing. But it lacks beauty. Most of it is unpleasant. Some speak of its massive strength. Keats has finely described what strength means, when it has to be spoken of in that manner as an artist's salient trait:—

> Strength alone though of the Muses born
> Is like a fallen angel: trees uptorn,
> Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and sepulchres
> Delight it; for it feeds upon the burrs
> And thorns of life.

Blake cultivated the grand style of Michelangelo. But too often there is no trace whatever of his model in his grotesque deformations. In particular, he was obsessed by foreshortening, especially the foreshortened arm and thigh. Tintoretto and other Italians paint daring feats of foreshortening which, however, do not leap out from their large compositions. In the New York Public Library, it is possible to see how Blake, having imagined a fine form, foreshortened it into deformity. For a book illustration, he imagined the body of an unwinged angel, descending, headforemost, with trumpet at lips, to awaken the dead. In carrying his plan into execution, he ruined the design by grotesquely and unnecessarily foreshortening the arm and thigh. The illustration was one of a set made by contract with a publisher, for an *édition de luxe*. The publisher was wily, and dishonest. He knew that Blake had a certain gift which was likely, however, to take a wild form, and he knew also that Blake was worse than temperamental about accepting suggestions. The publisher therefore tampered with the contract. He got the designs from Blake, and then gave them to a conventional Italian engraver to tone down their eccentricity and prepare them for the public. At the New York Public Library one can see Blake's original and the changes by the Italian. Blake was furious at being cheated. But the unscrupulous publisher and his conventional engraver had the better judgment. They straightened the foreshortened arm and thigh of the angel, and gave natural lines to a Michelangelesque athlete.

The infrequent shining out of beauty in the work of Blake is the more noteworthy inasmuch as the goal toward which he was striving—all that he symbolizes in the word Jerusalem—he represents as a centre where Art for the first time finds an atmosphere for expression. "I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty both of body and mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination. O ye relig-

Digitized by Google

ious, discountenance every one among you who shall pretend to despise art and science. What is the life of man but art and science?" There may be a sense in which Blake is right. But his words recall the old Greek fable of the people who were so enamoured of the Muses that they vowed to spend days and nights in singing their praises. The Muses, however, grew very bored by those praises, and changed their foolish adorers into crickets, who could only chirp! Blake does not mention the *will,* at all, in his constructive spiritual scheme. The imagination is an important instrument. But one who wishes to become a great artist, cannot magnify the imagination and pass over the will, without becoming a "cricket." Such a one-sided course means blindness as to the value of discipline. Blake's complete lack of discipline, even his ardent admirers acknowledge. Gilchrist, his very partial biographer, summing up his long study of the man and his work, writes: "he was impatient of control, or of a law in anything,—in his Art, in his opinions on morals, religion, or what not." Gilchrist demurs at the opinion of Blake expressed by Wordsworth and Southey—"great, but undoubtedly insane genius." Gilchrist suggests that the milder word, undisciplined, or ill-balanced, be substituted for insane. After all, the point at which habitual uncontrol passes into insanity is not easy to fix precisely. But to class a man as an unbalanced genius is to rank him with the minor and not with the great.

If Blake be judged as a man of letters, there can be no doubt that his rank is far below the generation of poets who were partly his contemporaries. There was nothing unique in his literary aim. Wordsworth and Keats, two different types, each succeeded, in his own way, in vindicating a high place for the imagination, a supreme place; but it was a disciplined imagination they revered. Endeavouring to bring more of their natures under the mild yoke of discipline, they achieved the verse which is, each in its own manner, an ornament of our literature. In the fourteenth book of the *Prelude,* his spiritual autobiography, Wordsworth says of the disciplined imagination:—

> This alone is genuine liberty.

And Keats, always sensitive to transcendent beauty, which he thought might at any moment meet him face to face, wrote of it:—

> The thought thereof is awful, sweet, and holy,
> Chasing away all worldliness and folly.

Blake aimed at the same goal as Keats and Wordsworth. He has left mere chips of beauty. He failed as artist because he would not submit to discipline.

Where Blake has an aim different from his contemporaries, and where he might have won distinction, perhaps unique, is as occultist—in his effort to work for true religion and true science. Here, too, he failed. He became lost in the psychic whirl and did not rise to clear

Digitized by Google

vision. Some of his "prophetic" works read as if he had seen the Stanzas of Dzyan, reflected upside down and grotesquely foreshortened.

> Earth was not, nor globes of attraction;
> The will of the Immortal expanded
> Or contracted his all-flexible senses;
> Death was not, but Eternal life sprung:
> . . . .
> A shriek ran through Eternity,
> And a paralytic stroke,
> At the birth of the human shadow.

There are threads of Wisdom in his confused, incoherent writing. "I give you the end of a golden string," he wrote as the first line of a poem. He gave hints of the inner Wisdom, and one who is eager, might follow the golden string until the certain Path is reached. Blake himself does not give whole cloth. He was a madman who frayed out threads and shreds from the robe of Wisdom. He might have served the Lodge and their cause. He failed and disappointed.

C. C. C.

A doctor who has made a specialty of nervous diseases, so we read, has found a new remedy for the blues. His prescription amounts to this: "Keep the corners of your mouth turned up; then you can't feel blue." The simple direction is: "Smile; keep on smiling; don't stop smiling." It sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? Well, just try turning up the corners of your mouth, regardless of your mood, and see how it makes you feel; then draw the corners of your mouth down, and note the effect, and you will be willing to declare "there's something in it!"—FATHER LASANCE.

Digitized by Google

GOSSIP

THE poor word did not always have a bad meaning; it has been dragged down from high spiritual estate. In its archaic form "godsyp", it meant literally "related in God", and was used to designate a sponsor in baptism. Then it slipped a little, as words will, and came to mean a friend with whom one has familiar talk, to whom one can say anything,—the understanding friend whom we all seek, and some of us find, in this world of lonely spaces. It is comfortable to believe that this was not so much a slip as a real widening of significance, hinting that we dare only to take our ease with those who are "related to us in God". By-and-by the poor thing took a big landslide and came to mean just tattle,—leaky, vulgar, silly tattle; and that is how we use the word to-day, prefixing "personal" to emphasize its ignominy, apparently quite forgetting that "personal gossip" *can* be the most loving and understanding thing in the world.

Gossip in one form or another is inseparable from existence; it is one expression of the inevitable preoccupation of life with living, and it will continue until the mind of man shall cease to register reaction to the destinies of man. As with most inevitable things, it is potent for both good and ill. In its silent form, which we call meditation, its potency is highest,—here, to make us safe, it must positively be spelt "godsyp". It is probably not confined to humans. Birds, for instance, are inveterate gossips. They often sound like what country people call "a good tell", but this turns suddenly acrimonious if they get personal, and bird rushes at bird with indignant outcries when statements are repeated. Much misunderstanding and unhappiness among the nests results from this habit. You may sometimes see two horses in their lunch hour gossiping about a mean driver; and who can blame them? As to the poor unresting bandar-logs, they have no conversational alternative except scolding. When two talk in a corner of their cage, throwing uneasy glances behind them, it is easy to see that they are saying the nastiest things possible about the others, and who can blame *them?* No doubt even fishes gossip. As to human beings, if they ever stop long enough to give themselves a chance, it is considered the correct thing to condemn soundly, and utterly to repudiate, the pursuit; at least it is felt that though one's own gossip is harmless and excusable, everyone else should undoubtedly be muzzled.

On the low plane where it usually prevails, gossip is a hideous thing—it all depends upon the plane. The bandar-logs themselves cannot sink far below the detestable "he said" and "she said" and "I was told not to repeat this, *but*", and so on, for ever and for ever. This can be done without brains, when it bores to tears; and without heart, and then the devils have entered in. The fruit of it is always poison, an irritant

Digitized by Google

poison fatal to the germs of mutual understanding and good will, and almost impossible to eradicate from the system. Most people have the grace to be ashamed of this plane even while they function on it.

If the matter were thus simple, it could be dismissed by the self-respecting with a final and all-including "thou shalt not", but the roots of gossip are buried deep in holy ground. The fine flower of brotherly love springs from the same soil, for the instinctive preoccupation of humanity with humanity shall not produce only weeds. Art also flowers splendidly here, and all Art gossips. We have been told that its province is to "purge us with pity and with terror" and for that it must tell us of ourselves, it must deal with people, with the desperate and hopeful little race of man. Every real poem, every true picture, every honest book, and even most dishonest ones, are efforts to bridge gulfs, to establish relationships, to break up the sense of separateness. The artist, be he never so coolly detached, is avid for συμπάθεια "a feeling together". He says in effect, "this is how life looks to me—can such fulfilment be mine that it also looks so to you?" He is empowered to express us to ourselves, and the great things of Art live on and on because they have gained the assent of humanity—"yea, thus, and thus, it is with us."

> And my song from beginning to end
> I found again in the heart of a friend—

no fame, no wealth can be named with this rapture. It is another way of finding what love finds directly, and it is gained largely by sublimated gossip.

But, it may be objected, is Art to be held guiltless? By no means: in effect one is torn every day between reverent gratitude and a desire to box its ears. When the silly world, calling for stories like a child at dusk, is lured by psychic rubbish, or worse, down wasteful and forbidden ways, then Art stands arraigned and our souls must be the judge.

The problem for disciples is how to deflect this incessant stream of comment on life, into some channel where it may serve the Master's purposes, instead of balking them; how to lift our interest in each other from the low material, the dangerous psychic, to a higher plane; how to make the Master accessory to the fact.

Personal gossip on the psychic plane is a thing compared to which the "he said" and "she said" of the illiterate, is a harmless nursery game. It is often delicately elusive, entertaining, lenient, sporadically charitable. It is indulged in by people who have seen so much of life, lived through so many stories themselves, sat through so many plays and faced so many human problems, that they have grown expert; they honestly, as it is phrased, "take an interest in life for its own sake", but the step from this to making a playground of the sanctities of

Digitized by Google

friendship, is sometimes a short one. Those people who pride themselves on psychological acumen are the *enfants terribles* of this game, and it is played by tongues that have not lost their power to wound.

The theosophical student is largely recruited from this class, for Theosophy does not appeal to the stupid, but to people of aroused psychic force. The best thing that can happen to such a student is to be brought up with what is known as "a round turn". If so fortunate as to be attracted to a group where only the highest teaching prevails, he cannot fail to be impressed with the irresistible stress laid upon the matter of Love and all Love's discretions. He finds that any rules given for his guidance are based on the absolute determination that the individualities of others shall be reverently screened; that a spiritual *noli me tangere* is theosophical etiquette; he finds that to be spiritually well bred is to hear no evil, speak no evil, think no evil; he finds "the new commandment" which He gave unto us, printed in invisible ink on every page, and the Angel of Silence, finger on lip, awaiting him at every turn; in short, he finds that the Theosophical Movement is actually based on the brotherhood of man, just as it always said it was. If he also finds himself surprised, so much the more goose he. With all this he discovers, if he did not know it before, that the warp and woof of life is so heart-thrilling, so love-stirring, so watched by Great Ones who hardly venture to breathe upon it as they weave, that there is no place for the little personal judgments of little personal people.

"Let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay", was the admonition given to his chêlas by the Prince of Gossips, and then and there he gave them practical demonstrations of his method. Well he knew that the poor things who hung about him would not listen unless they were gossipped to, and so he gossipped, but with what imperturbable discretion, with what sublime impersonality! The stories he told them were all about people, and are as full of human interest to-day as when the silent thousands drank them in. They are as minutely "noted" as the baldest realism of the most realism-drunk devotee; they are so entertaining that children listen and say, "tell it again", and so close to the heart of life that they have served as a running comment on life from that day to this. Only once through all the parables were names mentioned—those of Dives and Lazarus—and, as they were both dead, discretion was not marred. "A certain king made a marriage for his son", "There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard", "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves". Observe that careful use of the word "certain", bestowing all the vraisemblance of a name. "Jump right in with your human appeal —give it to them hot", demands the slangy twentieth century editor. Two thousand years ago *he* "gave it to them hot"; *he* met the unappeasable craving with the undying genre. True stories he told them, as true as Love, as true as Life, for they were spoken by the spirit to the spirit—they were gossip raised to the spiritual plane.

Digitized by Google

But the student of the Wisdom wants more than this. "Why speak ye unto them in parables", the disciples asked; and the answer was, "Because it is given unto *you* to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given". Perhaps some of us begin to sense dimly that deepening and widening of consciousness for which we watch and pray, that other plane where deep shall call unto deep and talk shall be transcended.

Plotinus is not speaking of the Masters, but of disciples who have begun to understand, when he says:—

"They see themselves in others. For all things are transparent, and there is nothing dark or resisting, but everyone is manifest to everyone internally and all things are manifest; for light is manifest to light. For everyone has all things in himself, so that all things are everywhere. . . . and infinite is the glory."

L. S.

Here are some little practices very easy and of wonderful efficacy, for keeping up union of hearts, that source of happiness here below. They are summed up in this word: be always amiable. For this purpose, observe faithfully the following rules: 1. *Smile habitually.* 2. *Never answer by a NO, or a negative sign when a superior commands.* 3. *Spare others all the trouble that you can take on yourself.* 4. *Never show yourself discontented or sulky.* 5. *Repress every impatient gesture, every unguarded word.* 6. *Let a kind word accompany the orders given to inferiors.* 7. *Even when a reproof is well deserved, never administer it with rudeness or bitterness.* 8. *Do not forget the little formulas of politeness, the amiable expressions that are usual: "thank you", "if you please", etc. We grant that to keep up such practices we must sometimes make sacrifices; but just as there is no happiness without sacrifice, so also every sacrifice brings with it a little happiness. Let us only try, and we shall soon regret not having acted thus all our life.*—THE ART OF BEING HAPPY.

Digitized by Google

"BY WHOM?"

KENA UPANISHAD

TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT WITH AN INTERPRETATION

II

If thou thinkest: I know It well, little, indeed, of a truth, knowest thou that form of the Eternal—that form which thou art, that form which is in the Divine Powers; but if thou sayest: It is to be searched for and sought out, then I think It is known of thee.

He who says: I think not that I know It well, nor do I not know It—he, indeed, knows It. He who says: I know It, knows It not; he who thinks: I know It not, he knows It.

Of whom It is not understood, of him It is understood; of whom It is understood, he knows It not. It is uncomprehended of those who comprehend; It is comprehended of those who comprehend It not.

When It is known through illumination which turns toward It, and so is understood, then he who thus knows It, finds immortality. Through that Supreme Self he finds valour; through illumination he finds immortality.

If he has come to the knowledge of It in this present life, this is the supreme good. If he has not come to a knowledge of It, great is his loss, his fall. Searching for, and discerning It in all things that are, sages, going forth from this world, become immortal.

THE subject of these enigmatical sentences is the Eternal, the Supreme Self of all beings. And in this second name of that ineffable Mystery one may, perhaps, find a way to an understanding of these riddles.

Let us begin by realizing that Spiritual Life, the Eternal, the Supreme Self cannot be known by the lower, external mind; the marvellous piece of machinery which we have through ages developed, to deal with material objects and conditions; the mind which determines the nature of things external by measuring them, by comparing, by weighing one against another; the mind on which we depend in the practical things of daily life.

This wonderful piece of machinery has been specialized for exactly these practical ends, and has a certain quite limited scope. It can weigh and measure and compare. It can never, because of its very nature, tell us about the real nature of anything; can never tell us what anything really is. This limitation is of the essence of its nature, because it is of no practical value to us, in our daily lives, to know the real nature of things, any more than it would be of practical value to rabbits to know the botanical classification of the different grasses. Rabbits can get along quite well with a relative knowledge, the knowledge of the flavour

Digitized by Google

and wholesomeness of different green things; any further knowledge would be a useless encumbrance.

So in us the lower, external mind, the mind which looks outward upon external nature, needs only relative knowledge of things, and not a knowledge of what they really are. It was brought into being for just that purpose, and is, by its nature, strictly limited to that function.

But there is within us another power, the beginning of which is intuition. Bergson, who has approached nearest to the Eastern Wisdom in his consideration of these high problems, rightly says that this power, intuition, is not a machine which measures and compares, but is the representative in us, in our inmost being, of the Infinite Life; is at once the Infinite Life and the most real element of our being; and, because it is this, intuition can give us some perception, some experience, of Infinite Being; not through a process of outward viewing, of weighing and measuring and comparing, but through direct spiritual self-consciousness, through being that which we know.

The external mind, therefore, cannot know Life, the Eternal, the Supreme Self of all beings. But, through a reversal of the tendency of our lives, through a withdrawing of ourselves from the entanglements of external things and a turning inward and upward within ourselves, we can awaken intuition, we can reach spiritual self-consciousness; we can begin to realize the Eternal, because the Eternal is the very essence of that new part of ourselves which we have awakened to consciousness; or, to speak more correctly, that part of ourselves to a consciousness of which we have awakened. We begin to know the Eternal by awaking to a realization that we are of the Eternal, that we are in the Eternal; that the Eternal is that within us, which both knows and is known. It is a process, not of mental measurement and comparison, but of spiritual self-consciousness.

A part of the lasting tragedy of human life is this: The lower, external mind not only cannot understand the real nature of things, the real nature of the Infinite Life, the Eternal, and our relation with that Life; the lower mind cannot even recognize that knowledge of this kind exists, nor is such knowledge of even the slightest interest to the lower mind. It will of itself never even ask the question.

But, in virtue of the divinity within mankind, in virtue of the spiritual stature and endowment which renders his inner nature to some degree self-conscious, there is, within him, some measure of intuition. And this first glimmer of intuition does ask the infinite question; does concern itself with the reality of things, does seek to sound the infinitudes. This it does, because it is itself of the essence of the Infinite.

Intuition, therefore, puts the question concerning things infinite. The lower, external mind catches the reflection of this question from the intuition above and within; seizes on the question, and strains its powers to find the answer. This would seem to be the motive and driving power of all rationalistic philosophies.

Digitized by Google

But, having undertaken this large task, the external mind carries with it its inherent limitations. It is not equipped, nor was it constructed, to perform work of this kind. Therefore, while straining at the task, the lower mind cannot accomplish it; it is fatally pursued by its inherent limitedness.

Seeking to unravel the secret of the external world, the lower mind discovers matter; discovers the elements that make up matter, defining these elements in terms of weight and measurement, and their interactions among themselves; discovers molecules within the elements, atoms within the molecules, ions or electrons within the atoms; and, at last, is as far from the ultimate solution as it was at the outset.

In exactly the same way, the lower mind measures the world and its girth; goes beyond the earth to the moon and sun and the whole solar system, measuring and weighing these; passes beyond the solar system to the starry hosts; and then, as before, comes to a halt; recognizes that it cannot conceive the universe either as having a boundary or as having no boundary. While ascertaining comparative measures and distances, it has learned nothing of realities. Everything is described in terms of something else; there is no finality, or possible finality.

Therefore all rationalistic philosophies end, and inevitably end, in agnosticism. That is the one logical conclusion to the search for knowledge in that way, by that instrument.

The tragedy, therefore, is this: That, having been inspired and set in motion by intuition, which alone puts the questions he seeks to answer, the rationalistic philosopher instantly turns his back upon intuition and commits the task to the lower mind, which is incapable of finding the answer. Having begun with intuition, he should go on with intuition; pressing with his whole life-force and energy in that direction, he will find it possible, with the co-operation of Divine Powers which are waiting to help him, to arouse intuition into a flame of light, a perceptive power which really knows the Eternal, because it is itself of the essence of the Eternal; a power which will know the Eternal as Infinite, Immortal; knowing this by the direct experience of spiritual consciousness; and, further, recognizing this radiant inner Life as the Supreme Self, the Supreme Life of all beings. Spiritual intuition recognizes that Life is infinite; in knowing, it therefore at the same time knows that it can never be completely known; that it can never be fully comprehended, girdled by knowledge. This recognition comes as an early experience of intuition, and is testified to by all, in all times and lands, in whom spiritual intuition has awakened. Yet, recognizing that the Life is infinite, and never fully to be known, intuition at the same time recognizes a kindred infinity within its own being, and sees for itself the promise of an immortal, infinitely growing Light.

While the lower mind cannot lay hold on realities, nor grasp what belongs to intuition, to spiritual consciousness, nevertheless the lower

Digitized by Google

mind is not in underlying substance different from intuition. It is rather a part of intuition, but crystallized, set, specialized; just as the hand is specialized, from the general substance of the body, for a limited use. But the specialized organ pays the penalty of its specialization and cannot re-become the general substance. A bird's wing is, in reality, a five-fingered hand specialized for flight; but it cannot rebecome a hand. The hoof of a horse is a still more specialized five-fingered hand; it can become neither hand nor wing.

But the important thing is, that the general substance can take this or that special form, because it has in it all that will be developed in either special form. So the intuition has in it the essence of all the specialized forms and means of knowledge which are crystallized in the lower mind. It is a noetic power with infinite power of application.

We shall miss the real purpose of these considerations if we think of them as applying only to forms and means of knowledge. The real application is to being rather than knowing only. It is not so much a question of spiritual knowledge as of spiritual life; of the awakened spiritual will, rather than of new modes of knowing.

It is not enough to do what has been suggested: to turn backward and inward the perceptive powers; we must turn ourselves backward and inward, renouncing not so much the lower mind, as the whole life of the lower self, with the whole body of corrupt inclinations and tendencies that make it up. It is a question of repentance, conversion, redemption through the divine grace of Spiritual Powers.

But the life of the lower self is tenaciously defended by the lower mind, which is the acute, resourceful, obedient servitor of the lower will. Therefore we can make the conflict easier by solving, to some degree, the problem of the lower mind, thus weakening its prestige and shaking its despotic sway. This is a means, a partial means only. The great battle must be fought out in the moral nature, with the light and help of Spiritual Powers; Powers which are constrained by the infinite Unity to lend their help. And the name of that constraint is Divine Love.

Keeping these general considerations in mind, it will be less difficult to read the riddle of the sentences translated:

If thou thinkest: I know the Infinite Eternal well, completely, that Eternal Life of which thou art, of which the Divine Powers are, undivided parts,—little dost thou know. It is to be searched for and sought after in the inner, spiritual nature, which is to be entered by the door of sacrifice and aspiration, with the help of the Divine Powers; then, indeed, it will be known.

He who says: I think not that I know it well, so as completely to comprehend and girdle it with my knowledge; nor do I not know it, since it is the essence of my spiritual nature, and therefore my innermost consciousness and will, he, indeed, knows the Eternal.

With these clues and examples, it will not be hard to read the ancient riddle.

Digitized by Google

The Eternal, verily, won a victory for the Bright Powers. In the victory of That, of the Eternal, the Bright Powers magnified themselves. They, considering, said: Of us, verily, is this victory; of us, verily, is this might, said they.

That Eternal knew this thought of theirs. To them, verily, That manifested Itself. They knew It not. What apparition is this? said they.

They spoke to the Fire-god: Thou All-permeating, discover thou what this apparition is! said they.

Be it so! said he.

The Fire-god ran up to That.

That said to him: Who art thou?

The Fire-god, verily, am I! said he. The All-permeating am I!

If that be so, what valour is in thee? said That.

Even this all can I burn up, whatever there be, here in the world! said he.

Before him That laid down a blade of grass.

Burn this! said That.

He went forward toward it with all swiftness. He was not able to burn it.

From That, verily, he turned back.

I have not been able to discover what that apparition is! said he.

And so they spoke to the Wind-god: Thou Wind-god, discover thou what this apparition is! said they.

Be it so! said he.

The Wind-god ran up to That.

That said to him: Who art thou?

The Wind-god, verily, am I! said he. He who rests in the Mother am I!

If that be so, what valour is in thee? said That.

Even this all can I take up, whatever there be, here in the world! said he.

Before him That laid down a blade of grass.

Take up this! said That.

He went forward toward it with all swiftness. He was not able to take it up.

From That, verily, he turned back.

I have not been able to discover what that apparition is! said he.

And so they spoke to the Sky-lord: Thou Might-possessor, discover thou what this apparition is! said they.

Be it so! said he.

The Sky-lord ran up to That. That vanished from before him.

The Sky-lord there, verily, in the shining ether, came upon a Woman greatly radiant, Uma, daughter of the Snowy Mountain.

To her the Sky-lord spoke: What is this apparition? said he.

Digitized by Google

She spoke: The Eternal, verily! said she. In the victory of That ye were magnifying yourselves, said she.

From her, verily, he knew: It is the Eternal.

The passage just translated is, perhaps, the most delicious bit of Sanskrit prose that has come down to us; fascinating in the great simplicity of its style, charming in its sense of humour.

It is, at the same time, one of the deepest passages in all the Upanishads, the profoundest books of the Eastern Wisdom.

We can, therefore, hope to discover only a part of its mystery, which is, indeed, the supreme mystery of the Eternal.

We can best seek the meaning of this splendidly vivacious piece of symbolism by translating certain sentences from a Vedanta catechism attributed to one of the great Masters of the Eastern Wisdom, Shankaracharya, who both edited and commented on the greater Upanishads, though the commentaries we have were probably written not by that Master but by some of his disciples.

The sentences are these:

The Supreme Self, attributing itself to, and becoming self-conscious in, the natural body, is called the All-pervading (Vishva, Vaishvanara).

The Supreme Self, attributing itself to, and becoming self-conscious in, the mental body, is called the Radiant (Taijasa).

The Supreme Self, attributing itself to, and becoming self-conscious in, the causal body (Karana sharira) is called the Illuminated (Prajna).

The Supreme Self (Atma) in its own form, is Infinite Being, Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Bliss.

There is, therefore, on the one hand, the Supreme Self, the Eternal. On the other hand, there are the three bodies, counting from below upward, the natural body, the mental body, the causal body. And, in each of these three bodies, there is the apparition, the presentment, of the Supreme Self: the self in that body. In the natural body is the vital, natural self; the self common to all living things, the all-permeating, all-pervading vital fire. In the mental body is the personal self, in the higher sense of personality, the personal man redeemed. In the causal body is the self of illumination, the permanent individuality, as distinguished from the true personality.

One might, perhaps, distinguish these three as the self of the ordinary man, the self of the full disciple, and the self of the Master.

This seems to be very closely the ground covered by the first, or microcosmic, meaning of our ancient parable.

The victory which the Eternal won for the Bright Powers would appear to be the victory of manifestation, of existence in manifested life.

This manifestation, like the unrolling of a curtain, is let down through the Three Worlds, the spiritual world, the mid-world and the natural world.

Digitized by Google

In the lowest of the three, the natural world, Life is manifested as the habitual self, perhaps it would be better to say, the vital self, in the natural body.

On its own plane, natural life, vitality, pervades all things and sets all things aflame with vital breath. Through that power, the whole natural universe moves and breathes and has its being.

But, faced with the mystery of Life, the natural self is impotent. Even a blade of grass presents an unconquerable enigma. The digestive powers even of a rabbit can consume the blade of grass. But the natural intelligence even of the wisest botanist cannot solve the ultimate problem of the blade of grass, the mystery of the being that is within it.

For the self of the mental body, which begins where reflective self-consciousness begins, but which fully disentangles itself from the natural self only when the disciple comes to full self-consciousness in the mental body, the ultimate mystery is equally impenetrable. The activity of the mental self, like the wind of heaven, sweeps to the uttermost bounds of visible space, only to be completely baffled. The intelligence of that self cannot take up even a blade of grass, and discern its final secret.

We come now to deep waters; waters considerably beyond the depth of the present interpreter. But, in the writings attributed to Shankaracharya, there is what would appear to be a clue. It is said there that the causal body has two aspects: on the one hand, it is the vesture of the illuminated consciousness of the Master, the immortal; on the other hand, the causal body, since it is the basis of individuality, and, therefore, of separate existence, of differentiation, is, in a sense, opposed to the Oneness of the Eternal. The heterogeneous cannot comprehend the homogeneous. The differentiated cannot comprehend the undifferentiated.

Looking at this from another point of view: Even when the disciple has attained to mastery, fully awakening the illuminated self-consciousness in the causal body, there appear to be two alternative ways open: He may either elect to enter Nirvana, which an august authority has called "a glorified selfishness"; or he may renounce his reward, and enter the gate of absolute sacrifice.

Only if he choose the second alternative, has he entered into the true mystery of the Eternal.

It would seem that there are in him the two counterbalancing tendencies: on the one hand, the causal body which, as the basis of separateness, is biased toward separate existence, individual Nirvana; on the other hand, the illuminated consciousness, the very light of the Eternal, inspiring him to renounce individual bliss and to throw his whole life and being into the continuing struggle of All that lives, the eternal warfare for spiritual victory.

But these are somewhat rash speculations, venturings into too deep water.

Digitized by Google

Besides its application to the microcosm, to sevenfold man, our ancient parable has also its macrocosmic side, referring to the same principles in their universal aspect, as principles of worlds and solar systems. This macrocosmic side is brought out in the passage which follows, and which completes this Upanishad:

Therefore, verily, these Bright Powers stand in rank above the other Bright Powers, namely, the Fire-god, the Wind-god, the Sky-lord; for they touched That most nearly. And because he first knew that It is the Eternal, therefore the Sky-lord surpasses in rank the other Bright Powers; for he touched That most nearly, he first knew That, saying, It is the Eternal.

Of That, this is the teaching: That flashed forth from the lightning, like the twinkling of an eye. This concerns the celestial Powers.

Now, as concerns the Self: To That, intelligence approaches; and through That, the will constantly remembers That. This, verily, is named adoration of That; as adoration of That, it is to be approached with reverence. He who knows That thus, to him all beings are subject in loving obedience.

Thou hast said: Master, tell the Upanishad, the secret teaching! The Upanishad is declared to thee; we have, of a truth, declared the Upanishad concerning the Eternal; for this Upanishad, fervour, control, holy work are the support; the Vedas are its members; truth is its abode.

He who rightly knows this secret teaching, putting away darkness and sin, in the unending heavenly world which is to be won he stands firm, he stands firm.

We have, perhaps, in this last passage, the clue to the most mysterious personage in our ancient parable: Uma, daughter of the Snowy Mountain, Uma Haimavati.

In the later and more exoteric, but still mystical, tradition of India, Uma is the consort of Shiva, Third Person of the Trimurti, the Lord of mystical wisdom, whose name signifies the August, the Benign. It is, therefore, the hidden wisdom, personified as the child of the Himalaya, who reveals the Eternal.

Curiously, while the inner significance of the name of this Woman greatly radiant is lost in Sanskrit, it must have been clear in the older tongue which lies behind Sanskrit; for it remains in a group of younger Aryan tongues called Slavonic. Here, the root Um is the common word for intelligence.

Cosmic Intelligence, therefore, on the one hand, the divine power which has been called Cosmic Electricity; and, on the other, that spiritual intelligence in man, the first manifestation of which is intuition, which steadily grows, as we watch and worship, till it becomes the infinite Light, revealing the Supreme Eternal; such would seem to be the significance of Uma, daughter of the Snowy Mountain, consort of the mystic Lord.

C. J.

Digitized by Google

LIFE AND DEATH

THIS morning I awoke to find a bitterly cold blizzard blowing, and everything within sight outside, from the mountain tops down, thinly covered on their windward side with frozen drifted snow, though it is now late spring, and we are in the semi-tropics. Not so many days ago a hot dry wind, laden with sand, blew in from the Mojave desert, while an almost melting, stifling heat from a blazing sun penetrated every shade. Along the great "fault" running eastward from here, and for miles on either side, the ground has shaken more violently and frequently of late. Everything has seemed as if in physiographical revolt,—as if refusing to submit to some higher decree, or trying to assert itself should the earth be about to shape some new feature.

From the window I saw our lone cypress tree bravely bend from the storm, time and again, as with set moral purpose, like some human creature stooping to adverse circumstances whilst refusing to break. Its nearest companion, a pepper tree, was being shorn of its small boughs and leaf and berry filigree; the birds we love so much had left their nests and found shelter in the thick vine climbing the house. Our flowers, too, were broken, and looked surprised and bewildered as the wind ruthlessly stripped them of their blossoms.

Standing there and musing, similar scenes of storm and restive elemental extremes, rebellion, breakage and strain, the possible throes of new things in the making came to me, but in human nature and life, and passed in widening sequence through my mind as associated ideas will do, until I stood in thought, as in like moods before, at the always half opened door of death itself, that greatest of all changes. Then I thought of a letter, unanswered these many months, eventually to find it in my inside coat pocket, where I had put it, intending to write in answer soon.

The writer of the letter described to me Macdonald's last moments. How she was with him alone, and that as he sank unconscious toward the end, the writer felt what seemed to her like the stillness that follows some deeply felt, reverently spoken benediction, which filled the room; though the dying man had not said a word, nor given any sign. She did not know why, but she thought this might always be, when so valourous and strong a soul as Mac was freed by death; that possibly we sensed more keenly and directly the soul's finer life and influence at the moment of its passing. And she wrote, asking, could I explain, or give her some thoughts of my own, to make the cause and reason for this just a little more clear? I shall now try to do this—speaking to you, my friend—from the fragments of teaching I have gathered here and there, although the incidents of our inner life at death are not made

Digitized by Google

visible to such as you and me, save as we can see them reflected in some simile, and then only as in a glass darkened by our own and this world's sin and shadow.

Most of us have read that when one is drowning, the principal scenes and events and most intimate associations in the life then seemingly closing, unfold to outer memory. Well, this is always true at death, I understand, when the soul, to the extent that it had life in us, recalls to inner memory, and to deeper, spiritual consciousness its own purpose and impulses, and so gathers from the field of our past work and thought and imaging, the few small gleanings which reflect its own pure light, such as were made aglow with the sacrificial essence of loving deeds; to the end that it may weave, as it were, from the life-stuff of these, a white and seamless and more befitting outer garment, suggestive of the one He wore, so difficult and costly to make, in which to enter heaven. This will be partially unknown to the outer mind, or to that "Raymond"-like after-death personality we so commonly mistake for the Immortal Self.

I have often pictured the soul thus pausing in self-examination at the close of its life-day, conscious of its spiritual successes and failures, victories and defeats, and of the joy and pain of it all,—the Master's power and love made manifest, and all human affections deepened and strengthened.

Yet, after all, I should like to make clearer the life and actuality that no words, least of all my own, can convey,—though they may perhaps serve to make Mac's parting response more intelligible, and as real and lasting as he intended it to be. I think that we should all feel something of this when by the side of one who is dying, if only we could be silent and still, and not too benumbed by our grieving.

If we may venture further, where neither words nor similes belong, and where time as we know it does not enter, it would seem that the moment of our going is known, and that the compassionate Angels of Death are there—saddened or made joyous by the memory's kaleidoscopic record of our life as we and they now see it, divested of its outward seeming, its motives and merit laid bare,—and who make of death a holy thing, our life's closing sacrament, to some a beatific vision of the Master himself.

If in that bright and searching light, it is seen that we have lived as selfishly as most of us have done; or that we have idled dreamily our precious time and life away, which it cost Him so much to give us,—as you and I and so many alas! are doing—so that we did not fully provide for a spiritually conscious life hereafter, and the darkness caused by this proves overwhelming at the close, then we shall sleep as in the night, but to dream of Him still, where other guardian Immortals in the Cause of the Masters keep silent watch and ward over the slumbering souls of men, until the Angels of the Dawn shall call us to childhood and to outer life, to our daily task once more.

Digitized by Google

Only in the creative light of day, and by continual hard inner work, can we earn and receive in full that wage of holiness, our spiritually self-conscious life and immortality. And night and day, our sleeping and waking, our nightly journey back to Him, to refresh us for our daily heavenward toil, were in the beginning God's given symbol to us of our ever-recurring life and death.

Something of communion with one's own Master in soundest sleep, I am told, is in a measure true even for the worst amongst us, so be it that we have not sinned altogether beyond pardon. Were it not so, we could not go so buoyantly from day to day as we do; for most men and women, deprived of such nightly inner life and daily support, would soon fall wholly exhausted by the struggle, or become insane.

Perhaps the reason why the sacred books, both of the east and of the west, invariably allude to after-death consciousness in the metaphors of sleep and dreaming, is because only these will adequately express, in our psychologically imperfect language, our common spiritual dormancy as compared with the fully awakened and divinely illumined consciousness of a Master of Life, or with that of a disciple, or saint. These, by virtue and strong aspiration, and ceaseless devotion in life, have so far wrested the victory from death as to have awakened from their age-long, inner slumber to get a glimpse of the eternal morning sun; to sense something of its glory, and of the life and beauty of the Master's world—while we still sleep maybe, or are scarce half awake to the possibilities of inner life.

That long silent, peaceful-seeming night which we call death, is more gestative and more reminiscent of life by far than any dream could be. Our loved ones are indeed there, they whom we love and leave behind, with those who have gone before. As our beclouded vision then grows clearer, we shall see them as in our highest moments we knew them inwardly to be, clothed with a radiance not yet visible to us, as so often and so truly we have been told. Nor need they be any less living and human to us. The seen and unseen worlds, their planes of life, are said to interpenetrate, so the way between them is always open. And we have only to be sufficiently clean of heart to feel inwardly near one to another, or to be conscious of a lost and loved one's presence, and to commune inwardly with them. For truly to love and to be loved, and to know how to love, are part of our everlasting reward.

The depth and intensity of our devotion, our daily offerings of prayer and self-sacrifice, and the will and endeavour to obey and hourly to reach up to our Master while we are here, will be the measure of our abiding joy and conscious communion with Him hereafter.

Here I would like to remind you of the signs at the cross-roads, placed there by Masters and Disciples; their many written warnings, all so needful at this time of perilous psychic bypaths leading downwards and away from the soul; and of that "road to Endor," so disastrous in the end for all concerned. Yet it tempts the many who selfishly mourn,

Digitized by Google

indifferent to the soul's immediate need at passing, of quiet and recuperation,—a need as great as of our prayers and vicarious intercession. I read Sir Oliver Lodge's article on the church and psychical research*. Intended as an earnest plea to churchmen and religious to strengthen by spiritism their solace of hope and comfort to the bereaved, it would rather tend subtly to undermine our essential faith in things of the immortal life which, with our physical and psychical eyes, we shall never see. The author seems unintentionally to deny by implication the very goodness of God, and our hidden approach to Him. To me it is again the echo of that far, familiar cry,—"Lo here! Lo there!"—a cry to worship at the shrine of some "borrowed" faith, instead of at Calvary or at the altar of the Living Christ. As if merely for the fee paid, we all could rise to the plane of life where the Masters are!

But what of the personality after death, in whom we are so much interested? Our personal life is a borrowed one; it rightfully belongs to the soul, as you already know. And at that parting of the ways in the "intermediate state," all that in our personal life lacked the soul's touch of inner life and virtue and beauty, all which the soul cannot then reclaim, continues until the soul's sustaining energies are spent; then it, too, will "sleep"; its animated consciousness held suspended against the day when the soul, then at rest, shall return to its personal life and outer labours.

We must know that hell, as well as heaven, has its many mansions; and that our after death experiences can never be exactly alike, any more than our lives are alike here, though we all live subject to the same general laws.

Still, what of Mac? you may ask. He chose to take up the Cross, and to follow wheresoever it led more than most men do, though he had only himself to give, so that he passed through life's cleansing flames when here, as you may have observed. His passage back to the Master, whose ever more abundant life flowed out to him, was thus made conscious, swift and sure.

LABOURING LAYMAN.

* *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1920.

Love God, and walk uprightly; do good, and never mind what others say.—ITALIAN PROVERB.

Digitized by Google

DANTE SKETCHES

DANTE was a mystic. This word has many meanings; but choose whichever you will,—so it be related to true and high things and not their counterfeit,—and I believe Dante has at once fulfilled it in himself, and is its interpreter. For Dante is one of the great men of all time, as well as one of the great writers. It is my belief that he could not have written as he did without a large measure of direct knowledge of the "high fantasies" he described, as against imaginative perception of them. He had not merely the capacity to transmit a poetic inspiration, which all true poets have, but he was self-conscious in that very world of inspiration. Dante *knew* whereof he spoke; and there is repeated evidence that he deliberately set himself to interpret divine things to his fellow-men.

To read Dante is to approach the mysteries of the Kingdom. Only the great scriptures of the world exceed him in depth of wisdom and beauty of form. He is so far greater than even the best of poets, that whole generations of men have failed to catch more than an echo of his true message. A host of commentators have busied themselves with the intellectual setting, the forms of symbolism, the technique of his art; but though a few have revealed his mind, scarcely one has understood his heart. "Dante," says a kindred, though a lesser spirit, Shelley, was "the Lucifer of that starry flock which in the thirteenth century shone forth from republican Italy, as from a heaven, into the darkness of the benighted world. His very words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with the lightning which has as yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain forever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and age has exhausted all its divine effluence which their particular relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight."

Dante approached very near the Light—that Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

> "But I already of myself was such as he would have me;
> Because my sight, becoming purged, now more and more was entering through the ray of the deep Light which in Itself is true.
> Thence forward was my vision, mightier than our discourse, which faileth at such sight, and faileth memory at so great outrage."[1]

Because Dante was a great poet he was necessarily an interpreter of the spiritual world, and of spiritual laws. All "high poetry", because it

[1] *Paradiso*, xxxiii, 50-57.

Digitized by Google

is "infinite", is also divine; it is wisdom as well as knowledge, goodness as well as virtue, beauty as well as loveliness. True poetry speaks not only with the cadences of an eternal harmony, but also with something of its compelling mystery, of its other-world authority. Poetry takes us towards—the highest poetry into—the home of all our aspirations, to the source of all our longings. It lifts us by the dynamic power of its own contact with creative force, out of our subjection to the chaos of material and psychic existence. "Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man." Dante was more than "the hierophant of an unapprehended inspiration",—he was an integral part of that inspiration because of what he was, and his poetry interpreted more of himself than is possible for most poets.

Dante's special genius, then, found expression in a sustained and determined effort to make the unseen real, the invisible visible. Never has a poet used the creative imagination, the image-making faculty, so deliberately, to translate the things of eternity into the limitations of time and space. He has an extraordinary gift of creating in the hearts of his readers the emotions, the aspirations, of his own soul. He has a power of sympathy which draws them into his own consciousness; he has a bewitching alchemy of words which resolves their intellectual prejudice and makes them one with him. His eyes see life as reflecting the soul, see nature as the vesture of God's loveliness; his piercing vision penetrates this vesture to the corresponding spiritual life that gave it birth.

> "The dawn was conquering the morning air, which fled before, so that from afar I recognized the trembling of the sea. . . .
> At the hour in which the swallow begins to tune her sad complaint unto the morning, perchance in memory of her former woes,
> And when our soul, more of a wanderer from the flesh and less a prisoner of thoughts, is, as it were, divinely free for her visions:" . . . [2]

By such swift intuition Dante connects the breathless hush of dawn, the first swallow twittering in a quiet sky, with that moment when the soul, burdened with the mystery of renewed contact with the spiritual world, pauses before returning to its house of flesh with messages and dreams, with "visions of the night". He has caught the soul of dawn, he reveals the source of its charm, he tells us why Nature is what it is.

There is no higher poetry than this. It sees life in terms of the soul, for purposes of the soul. It is closest to scripture and merges into it.

Few have even attempted what Dante accomplishes in every canto. Perhaps Aeschylus, the Book of Job, and parts of *Paradise Lost* and of *Prometheus* are the only conscious efforts to write such poetry that the West can show,—to which some might add the canticles of St. John of the Cross. Where, for instance, has humility, its essence and its symbology, been more delicately indicated than in the following lines—every word of

[2] *Purgatorio*, i, 115 and ix, 13-18.

Digitized by Google

which demands meditation? An Angel, nowhere named but quickly recognized, approaches:

> "To us came the beauteous creature, robed in white, and his countenance such as the morning star which trembles.
> His arms he opened, and then outspread his wings; he said: 'Come; here nigh are the steps, and easily now is ascent made.'
> To this announcement few be they who come. O human folk, born to fly upward, why at a breath of wind thus fall ye down?" [8]

In these typical passages we see that Dante takes images common enough in all imaginative poetry, but that he transforms them by placing them *in* the spiritual world. The setting of his world is not our ordinary setting, but lies above it in that of souls. Other poets take us into worlds of fairyland and romance, Dante to the real world of our immortality. Where the beauties of imaginative creation are with most poets the sufficient end, by means of which higher things are only incidentally reflected, with Dante they are the premeditated media, the deliberate instruments, of his higher revelation. He is always turning within, or more truly, his consciousness is so firmly fixed in the spiritual world that what he sees has but the one interest, the one relation. His eyes have the true vision, and he makes us see with him things which in our blindness were invisible before.

As a poet, this faculty gives Dante a right to the highest place; but it still remains to be determined how consciously Dante was a teacher of spiritual things. In other words, how much did Dante know? Was so great a genius a messenger, an agent, of the Lodge? Was he, unconsciously, an initiate; or did he, perhaps, have some personal knowledge of his fellowship and of his high calling?

There is much in his writings which bears on this topic; and though any precise conclusion must in each case rest with the reader's own apprehension of such things, Dante's words and method reveal a certainty of conviction which at least ranks him as a mystic of the highest order, if nothing more. After all, if "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned", it is also true that, "he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man".

Before writing the *Divina Commedia,* Dante started, and never finished, a philosophical exposition of certain *canzoni* of his own composition. This book he called *The Banquet,* a title in itself related to the mysteries from Egyptian and Chaldean days, through Greece, to Christianity. The key to much of Dante's meaning lies in this *Convivio,* though commentators have too frequently made the mistake of limiting themselves to the bare statements of his text, while disregarding the whole tenor of his thought, and the more or less obvious undercurrents which were his true purpose and intention.

[8] *Purgatorio,* xii. 88-96.

Digitized by Google

"Oh blessed those few who sit at the table where the bread of angels is consumed", he writes in the opening chapter, "and wretched they who share the food of sheep! But . . . they who are fed at so lofty a table are not without compassion towards those whom they see browsing round on grass and acorns in the pasture of brutes; and inasmuch as compassion is the mother of benefaction, they who know ever proffer freely of their good wealth to those poor indeed, and are as a living spring at whose waters the natural thirst above spoken of is refreshed."

We shall return to this use of the phrase "bread of angels"; but first, in order to show the full content of Dante's thought, it will be necessary to consider his method of writing. In the first chapter of the second treatise he says that "this exposition must be both literal and allegorical", and that it not only "may be" but "should be expounded chiefly in four senses". The first sense is literal, the second allegorical, which "is a truth hidden under beauteous fiction"; and Dante illustrates this by citing Ovid's account of Orpheus' power of music,[4] which draws not only animals but trees and stones, explaining that this signifies "the *wise man* with the instrument of his voice, maketh cruel hearts tender and humble; and moveth to his will such as have not the life of science and of art." Dante adds to Ovid's account of the appellation "wise man," and there is a suggestive interpretation of just what he means by "a life of science" in the fourteenth chapter, where he shows a series of correspondences between "the heavens" and science. He says that "by heaven I mean science"—using the two together as practically interchangeable, so that by science he implies heaven—"whereto we must needs consider a comparison that holds between the order of the heavens and that of the sciences". It is quite possible that by "the life of science" Dante indicated a life of, or in, heaven.

"The third sense is called moral", he continues; and his illustration further brings forward the traditional secrecy of the initiate. "When Christ ascended the mountain of the transfiguration, of the twelve apostles he took with him but three; wherein the moral may be understood that in the most secret things we should have but few companions."

"The fourth sense is called anagogical, that is to say, 'above the sense'; and this is when a scripture is spiritually expounded which even in the literal sense, *by the very things it signifies, signifies again some portion of the supernal things of eternal glory.*" Dante adds that he will always expound his ode first in the literal sense, and after that in "its allegory, that is its *hidden truth.*" He also says that the allegorical is the "*true* exposition"; and in his dedicatory letter to Can Grande, patron of the arts and Lord of Verona, he applies exactly the same canon of interpretation to the *Divina Commedia,* merely indicating that "although these mystic senses are called by various names, they may all in general be called allegorical, since they differ from the literal or historical." Dante and his predecessors frequently change the order or sequence of these

[4] *Metamorphoses,* x, 139 to 170, and xi, 1 to 18.

Digitized by Google

types of exposition, interchanging moral and allegorical for instance, but the essential idea remains the same.

In the face of this, the hostility of critics to a "mystical" interpretation of Dante can only be accounted for by their own feeling of helplessness when confronted by a claim to knowledge outside the range of their experience. It is true that the whole mediæval mind, receiving its impulse from the Alexandrian Neo-Platonists, was given to allegorizing, often absurd and extravagant in the extreme; for, as Dr. Jowett says, "they had a method of interpretation which could elicit any meaning out of any words." But nevertheless, the presence of counterfeits, like a shadow, is proof positive of a reality; and there is too much historical and scriptural authority for the evidence of the mysteries, too much kabalistic literature, too many saints, for the fact of their existence to be reasonably disputed.

There is no effort here to show that Dante was connected in any way with some one of the secret organizations,—such as the Rosicrucians, and Templars—to mention the best known—whose reputations, at least, have come down to us to-day. But what is suggested is that Dante knew enough about the spiritual world, its laws and its phenomena, to interpret it into the language of everyday life, and that he uses language and symbols, he selected just those ideas, if you will, from his authorities, which have always been associated directly with the mysteries.

Dante's knowledge, his erudition, was enormous. Dr. Moore devoted hundreds of pages to an analysis of the use of only the strictly classical authors in Dante, which he hoped would "enable students to form a more complete idea than was formerly possible of the encyclopaedic character of Dante's learning and studies, and of the full extent and variety of the literary equipment which enabled him to compose works covering a wider range of subjects than perhaps any other writer, certainly any other very great writer, ever attempted." [5] Now one of the noticeable things about Dante is that he not only used all this erudition to one end and for one purpose, but that he singled out for special emphasis authors noted for their suggestiveness, and for their reference to the other world. Virgil is not only his model and guide through hell and purgatory, but he quotes more from the sixth book, which describes the visit to Hades, than any other. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are full of the Greek mystery traditions; Plato, Aristotle, Statius, Lucan, all make similar contributions; while the Church Fathers, such as Origen, Jerome and Cassian, not to mention Augustine, were all known to St. Thomas Aquinas, and would have been readily accessible to Dante.

Together, therefore, with this contact with the best authors of antiquity, Dante was brought inevitably into touch with a mystical tradition, which in his day had far more standing than it has now. The acceptance, for instance, by all the Latin Fathers and the Schoolmen after them, of the fourfold interpretation of scripture applied by Dante to his own works, and the frequent abuse of it by the ignorant and mis-

[5] *Studies in Dante*, Edmund Moore, Oxford, 1896, First Series, p. 2.

Digitized by Google

guided amongst them, does not and cannot disprove the validity of such a method. All the mystics, those like a St. Theresa, a St. Catherine of Siena, or a St. Catherine of Genoa, who were in no way associated with any outer organization for the preservation of the mysteries, such as existed in Egypt, Greece and Palestine, nevertheless found it impossible to retail their spiritual experience except in the form of similes, of analogy, of cryptic, and at times almost incomprehensible, language. And where a body of people, conscious on such high planes, have sought a medium of intercommunication, the same symbolical language and the same use of certain physical correspondences have sprung up spontaneously in the most remote parts of the world—India and Peru, Greece and Egypt, Wales and Easter Island. In the widest sense, it is a study of comparative religion; in Dante's case there would seem to be evidence that he not only knew of the traditions and copied their methods by a sort of poetic instinct, but that single-handed he attained such rank in the spiritual world that he understood the language of such initiates as Pythagoras or Plato, let alone St. Paul and the *New Testament* writers, and that he could rightly claim to associate with them in their efforts to benefit mankind. One of the most superb claims ever made by any man is Dante's in the *Inferno,* when he describes his meeting, in the heathen limbo, with the shades of Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan.

> "Thus I saw assembled the goodly school of that lord of highest song, which like an eagle, soars above the rest.
> After they had talked together a space, they turned to me with sign saluting; and my Master smiled thereat.
> And greatly more besides they honoured me; for they made me of their number, so that I was a sixth amid such wisdom." [6]

Again, in the second chapter of the *Convivio,* after Dante points out that he is preparing a banquet, not as one who sits himself "at the blessed table" where "the bread of angels is consumed", but as one who gathers "at the feet of them who sit at meat of that which falls from them", nevertheless adds, "I am moved by the desire to give instruction *which in very truth no other can give.*"

The scriptural authority for a triple, or fourfold, interpretation of Scripture itself is found in *Proverbs* xxii, in the Latin Vulgate, which has direct significance as applying to wisdom. The passage reads in translation, "Incline thine ear, and hear the words of the wise: and apply thy heart to my doctrine. Behold, I have described it to thee three manner of ways, in thoughts and in knowledge." The distinction between thoughts and knowledge is an interesting one, the Latin word for the latter being *scientia,* the same used by Dante in a passage already quoted, a "life of science".

On these scriptural verses, Origen, the successor and spiritual son of the great Clement of Alexandria, comments at length. Origen was

[6] *Inf.* iv, 94-102. The word *senno* is often translated "intelligences"; but it really means strength of faculty, or wisdom. Note that Dante was *one* of the six, not the sixth or last.

Digitized by Google

born in 185 A. D., and the *De Principiis* from which we quote, was published before 231. This work was known to St. Thomas Aquinas, and could hardly have escaped Dante's omnivorous reading. It is of some moment, therefore, to find in this passage explicit allusion to the mysteries. After quoting the verses from *Proverbs* above, Origen writes: "Each one, then, ought to describe in his own mind, in a threefold manner, the understanding of the divine letters,—that is, in order that all the more simple individuals may be edified, so to speak, by the very body of Scripture, for such we term that common and historical sense: while if some have commenced to make considerable progress, and are able to see something more, *they* may be edified by the very soul of Scripture. Those again who are perfect, and who resemble those of whom the apostle says, 'We speak wisdom among them that are perfect, but not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, who will be brought to naught; but we speak the wisdom of God [*Theou Sophia*], hidden in a mystery, which God hath decreed before the ages unto our glory,'—all such as these may be edified by the spiritual law itself (which has a shadow of good things to come), as if by the Spirit." Referring to the fact that Clement "who had learned from the Holy Spirit, is commanded to announce, not by letter nor by book, but by the living voice, to the presbyters of the Church of Christ, *i. e.*, to those who possess a mature faculty of wisdom, capable of receiving spiritual teaching"—Origin adds words of great interest: "And by 'men', I now mean souls that are placed in bodies, who, relating those mysteries that are known to them, and revealed through Christ, as if they were a kind of human transactions, or handing down certain legal observances and injunctions, described them figuratively; not that any one who pleased might view these expositions as deserving to be trampled under foot, but that he who should devote himself with all chastity, and sobriety, and watchfulness, to studies of this kind, might be able by this means to trace out the meaning of the Spirit of God, which is perhaps lying profoundly buried, and the context, which may be pointing again in another direction than the ordinary usage of speech would indicate. . . . By an admirable discipline of wisdom, too, the law of truth, even of the prophets, is implanted in the Scriptures of the law, each of which is woven by a divine art of wisdom, as a kind of covering and veil of spiritual truths; and this is what we have called the 'body' of Scripture, so that also, in this way, what we have called the covering of the latter, woven by the art of wisdom, might be capable of edifying and profiting many when others would derive no benefit." [1]

It would seem that, included within the political, scientific, moral, poetic, and theological interests which fill Dante's works, there should also be sought, under "the covering of the letter, woven by a divine art of wisdom", a truly mystical meaning, and that Dante intended, and even directed, that it should be sought.

[1] *De Principiis*, Bk. iv., sections 11 and 14. We have quoted from the Latin text, not the Greek, as the former would have been the one available for Dante.

Digitized by Google

It is true that, as St. Jerome says, "The art of interpreting the Scriptures is the only one of which all men everywhere claim to be masters. To quote Horace again: 'Taught or untaught we all write poetry.' The chatty old woman, the doting old man, and the wordy sophist one and all take in hand the Scriptures, rend them in pieces, and teach them before they have learned them." But St. Jerome himself follows with a cautious but lengthy indication of the mysteries in the Bible: "Exodus, no doubt, is equally plain, containing as it does merely an account of the ten plagues, the decalogue, and sundry mysterious and divine precepts. The meaning of Leviticus . . . contains the description of Aaron's vestments, and all the regulations connected with the Levites", which "are symbols of heavenly things. The book of Numbers . . . Balaam's prophecy, and the forty-two camping places in the wilderness" are "so many mysteries."[8] So that both Origen and Jerome give patristic authority to the triple interpretation of Scripture, including the mystical. Cassian, a monk of Gallic birth (*c.* 360), who went to Palestine and Egypt, was the first to see the necessity for, and to divide the allegorical interpretation into two—the strictly allegorical and the anagogical, which he defines as follows: "But the anagogical sense rises from spiritual mysteries even to still more sublime and sacred secrets of heaven. . . . For it is one thing to have a ready tongue and elegant language, and quite another to penetrate into the very heart and marrow of heavenly utterances, and to gaze with the pure eye of the soul on profound and hidden mysteries; for this can be gained by no learning of man's, nor condition of this world, only by purity of soul, by means of the illumination of the Holy Ghost."[9]

These passages, quoted from three eminent Church Fathers, were the basis and authority constantly cited by the Schoolmen to justify the fourfold interpretation of Holy Scriptures. Possibly because Neo-Platonic allegorizing became so extravagant, Cassian's fourfold distinction, including the strictly allegorical and the anagogical, or truly mystical, was preferred to the earlier threefold division of Origen. Dante outlines the fourfold, using Cassian's word, anagogical; though, as already quoted, he points out to Can Grande that virtually the two are the same, all genuine allegorizing bordering on the mystical.

The existence of a tradition favouring mystical writing and mystical interpretation being established, it remains to be shown that Dante not only claimed to be himself both such a writer and such an interpreter, but that he used many of the time-honoured symbols, and also in many places expressed himself in language almost identical with that of the mystical writers of all ages. The "bread of angels" is probably one such symbol.

MARION HALE.

[8] Letter liii, sections 7, 8 and also ff.
[9] *The First Conference of Abbot Nestores*, caps. viii and ix.

Digitized by Google

HORIZONS

A LETTER has reached me from a friend about a mutual friend, whom I will call X. "Bad news." X. is in difficulties, and the writer of the letter is deeply concerned on his behalf. Will it seem unsympathetic if I tell them both what I really think? Perhaps I could tell Y., the writer of the letter. Perhaps I could say to him that his "bad news" may be read in another light, for it may mean that the whole process is being speeded up as far as X. is concerned, that the high gods are being infinitely kind to him, that with increased pressure there may come increasing light, and that, finally, his entire will may be swung over once and for all to the side of the spiritual world.

But there is a note almost of despair in Y.'s letter. He says: "X. has such a limited horizon that he is totally unable to see. . . . And although he admits the truth of nearly all of this, I have come almost to the point of believing that he will never really be able to see these things as they are."

It interested me enormously, that paragraph, for in it seemed to me to be the key to the whole situation. Y. implies, of course, that any one who is so restricted by the outward surroundings and circumstances of his life, in his opportunities for expansion and "self-expression," to use the present popular term, is thereby immediately and automatically hemmed in as well, in regard to his inner life; that while he may be able to see certain things with his mind, these same fatal and unfortunate restrictions of circumstances are going forever to make it impossible for him to do anything more than think feebly and intermittently about them, to gaze at this "limited horizon" with a sort of despairing longing.

"He has such a limited horizon": what exactly do we mean by the word "horizon"? I suppose that it could be defined in general terms as the line in one's vision where earth and heaven meet. And that line, to the physical eye, will seem near or far away, depending upon the light, the atmosphere, the configuration of the landscape. But in any event the view that one is going to get of the horizon must depend upon one's vision. If one looks clear-eyed, far-sightedly, one sees the outline clear-cut; one sees, too, the detail of all the intervening country, the up-sweep of the hills to the horizon's line, all the tangle and undergrowth and shadows of the valleys where the hills begin. But if one is physically near-sighted there is only, and at all times, a confused blur. At best, in certain lights, one may get passing glimpses of things slightly more remote. But for one so physically unfortunate there must be, in spite of straining and effort, a range outside the limit of vision for ever impossible as long as the disability persists.

Surely the parallel is clear. For when the eyes of the soul are near-sighted and blurred, when the man himself is self-centred and selfish,

Digitized by Google

when as a result he is constantly thinking in terms of the material, and of how things will affect him personally for good or for ill, then the soul's horizon, too, must be contracted and hemmed in. Such a man, missing utterly the presence of unselfish or heroic motive in the lives of others, must miss, too, the beauty of the lights and shadows and colours in his life's landscape. He sees, in the drab and gray atmosphere of his own chief motive and interest, not vistas of gladness and sunshine, far-stretched to the horizon where earth reaches up to heaven in aspiration and yearning, where heaven's blue comes down into and touches earth in blessing, but only a cloudy and lowering sky-line without promise and without form, the threatening of a storm always about to break upon him. And not only is his outlook upon his life's uttermost limit of possibility restricted and blurred, but he misses, too, the perspective of all those things which go to make up the more immediate surroundings of his soul. They, too, are indistinct, unrelated. Now and then, in a moment of unselfishness, one or other of them may appear for a time relatively clear against the darkness of its background. But for the near-sighted eyes of such a soul it will be too great an effort and a strain to hold it for long in this proper perspective, and the vision must fade again.

But when the eyes of the soul see clearly, when the Vision is clear and strong, when Love and not self fills the heart, the horizon changes and broadens, the man himself is alive to the significance of that which he sees. His light is that light which lighteth every man and illumines him who desires illumination; his atmosphere, in which he finds all things clearly outlined and defined, is the spirit in which he performs his duties. He recognizes as part of the configuration of his landscape, the immediate surroundings and practical circumstances of his life; but he sees them not as bounds or as limits, but as opportunities; not as barriers, but as endless possibilities. He rejoices in the sunshine and glory and uplift of the hills, but he rejoices still more in that tangle and undergrowth of the valleys, for he recognizes that there, in the shadows, are those problems and sorrows which make for life's fullness and fruition; he knows, if they are used aright, and are not allowed to use him, that therein is the Father glorified.

And he sees, too, in the proper and right perspective: the inter-relation of objects is plain. Now in the light of his motive of selflessness and of service, in his effort to do all things for his Master and for love of Him, he sees that all duties are inter-related and part of a great plan, that each least duty is consecrated and holy and so a joy to perform. And he knows, too, that no action is unimportant, that no duty is so trivial as to be without spiritual significance. Now he comes to see that the Master whom he loves and serves can take for His own, and can use in His greater work, the spiritual force generated by that consecrated motive and effort. And he sees that the help for the world that can be so given will —must—depend upon his own faithfulness and perseverance, upon his own courage and energy, upon his continuing effort, upon his holding

Digitized by Google

always the view of his life's horizon and landscape in that right perspective.

X. is so self-centred now as to be astigmatic; his horizon is limited by his vision, and by the atmosphere which he himself is helping to create. But once let in that Light, and all will be changed. Once substitute love for self-love, service of others for concentration upon self, and those restricted boundaries will vanish; all limits for the future will be removed.

"Not easy," it may be said. But X. already "admits the truth of nearly all" of these things upon which I have touched now, and of which Y. and I have talked together so often. He already feels his disability sufficiently keenly to be discontented about it. He must make a beginning, by a conscious effort of will; he must pray for strength and perseverance, and trust that these will come. Perhaps it will not be easy. But Y. might be able gradually to help him to more and more concentrated effort, to greater inner quiet. And Y. will be able, too, to help him with practical suggestions; to remind him that useless and unnecessary talk dissipates energy; that if he reads a worthless book he not only fills his mind with its worthless contents, but that he wastes time which might have been spent in quite another kind of reading, with the resulting benefits. And with the deeper peace, with the always improving motive, the desire on his part will be ever greater.

Only let him make a beginning and he will see better, little by little, where earth and heaven meet, the line clear and distinct at times and the horizon defined beyond peradventure, at others seemingly blended because of the glory of tender light suffusing all. And that light will reach first those darkest places farthest removed from the horizon itself, as a winter's sunrise penetrates first with a rosy glow the recesses of the woods and the cold hollows in the hills, before the sun itself beats down upon the world. He will see, too, and more and more often as he tries to see, the Cross outlined against his horizon's sky, as one sees it so often on the hilltops of France. As there, he will see it now dark and clear and steadfast against life's sunset sky, now radiant and glorious with promise in the beauty of an always resurrected day, of a new opportunity. But he must *search* his horizon. If he only glances up occasionally, he will miss it. He must look, and keep on looking. . . .

Yet perhaps, before I write all this to Y., it would be wise to reinforce the written word with a week of intense practice. I want so much to help them. Can I afford to preach until I have more perfectly performed?

STUART DUDLEY.

He that has never known adversity is but half acquainted with himself.—CALTON.

Digitized by Google

CONSCIOUSNESS AND HABIT

THEOSOPHY has been summarized as "intellectually an attitude, practically a method, ethically a spirit, and religiously a life." More than any other modern philosopher, Henri Bergson has grasped and utilized the first two elements of this theosophic quarternary, so that the technique of his work is of scarcely less interest to readers of the QUARTERLY than is the striking theosophic character of many of his conclusions. In his most recent volume of lectures and essays, *L'Énergie spirituelle,* published in English a few months ago, under the less attractive title of *Mind-Energy,* we have a discussion of the fundamental problems of the relation of life and consciousness, mind and matter, body and soul, dreams, memory, phantoms, and the significance of intellectual effort, whose study will repay our time and effort, and which may serve to continue and to supplement the line of thought pursued in our consideration of Dr. M'Taggart's work on *Human Immortality and Pre-existence.*

Let us look first to the attitude and method which Bergson adopts in his search for a solution of the fundamental problems of life, and to which he gives us the key in the opening pages of the book.

"Whence are we? What are we? Whither tend we? These are the vital questions which immediately present themselves when we give ourselves up to philosophical reflexion without regard to philosophical systems. But between us and these problems, systematic philosophy interposes other problems. 'Before seeking the solution of a problem,' it says, 'must we not first know how to seek it? Study the mechanism of thinking, then discuss the nature of knowledge and criticize the faculty of criticizing: when you have assured yourself of the value of the instrument, you will know how to use it.' That moment, alas! will never come. I see only one means of knowing how far I can go: that is by going. If the knowledge we are in search of be real instruction, a knowledge which expands thought, then to analyse the mechanism of thought before seeking knowledge could only show the impossibility of ever getting it, since we should be studying thought before the expansion of it, which it is the business of knowledge to obtain. A premature reflexion of the mind on itself would discourage it from advancing, whilst by simply advancing it would have come nearer to its goal and perceived, moreover, that the so-called obstacles were for the most part the effects of a mirage. . . . How much better a more modest philosophy would be, one which would go straight to its object without worrying about the principles on which it depends! It would not aim at immediate certainty, which can only be ephemeral. It would take its time. It would be a gradual ascent to the light. Borne along in an experience growing

Digitized by Google

ever wider and wider, rising to ever higher and higher probabilities, it would strive toward final certainty as to a limit.

"I hold, for my part, that there is no principle from which the solution of the great problems can be mathematically deduced. Moreover, I am unable to discover any decisive fact which clinches the matter, such as we expect to find in physics and chemistry. But it seems to me that in different regions of experience there are different groups of facts, each of which, without giving us the desired knowledge, points out to us the direction in which we may find it. Now to have only a direction is something. And it is still more to have several, for these directions will naturally converge towards one and the same point, and it is that point we are seeking. In short, we possess even now a certain number of *lines of facts,* which do not go as far as we want, but which we can prolong hypothetically. I wish to follow out some of these with you. Each, taken apart, will lead us only to a conclusion which is simply probable; but taking them all together, they will, by their convergence, bring before us such an accumulation of probabilities that we shall feel on the road to certitude. Moreover we shall come nearer and nearer to it through the joint effort of philosophers who will become partners. For, in this view, philosophy is no longer a construction, the systematic work of a single thinker. It needs, and unceasingly calls for, corrections and re-touches. It progresses like positive science. Like it, too, it is a work of collaboration." (pp. 4-7.)

These two paragraphs restate for us the theosophic attitude and method. Truth cannot be cabined in a phrase, or reality cramped into a formula. Each is larger than that in which we strive to contain it. Knowledge exists and is obtainable. But certainty can come only with experience. Truth is a goal toward which we must grow—the limit of an infinite sequence. But in advance of the ultimate union that alone gives certainty, the truth is pointed to by many converging lines of partial experience, each lit by a different facet of truth, yet in their totality indicating a symmetry and wholeness greater than we could predicate from any single point of view. Thus we can supplement our own vision by the vision of our fellows, and reinforce the evidence gained from one line of inquiry by that drawn from others. This is the familiar method that The Theosophical Society has practised for the forty-five years of its existence.

We can, perhaps, best illustrate Bergson's use of this method, and lead our readers to turn to the book itself, by quoting at some length from the first lecture, on "Life and Consciousness"; and we may hope, also, to draw from these passages a view of the relation of mind and matter which will make it apparent that the death of the body, so far from destroying consciousness, should but liberate and enlarge it.

"The first line or direction which I invite you to follow is this. When we speak of mind we mean, above everything else, consciousness. What is consciousness? There is no need to define so familiar a thing, some-

Digitized by Google

thing which is continually present in everyone's experience. I will not give a definition, for that would be less clear than the thing itself; I will characterize consciousness by its most obvious feature: it means, before everything else, memory. Memory may lack amplitude; it may embrace but a feeble part of the past; it may retain only what is just happening; but memory is there, or there is no consciousness. . . .

"But all consciousness is also anticipation of the future. Consider the direction of your mind at any moment you like to choose; you will find that it is occupied with what now is, but always and especially with regard to what is about to be. Attention is expectation, and there is no consciousness without a certain attention to life. The future is there; it calls us, or rather it draws us to it; its uninterrupted traction makes us advance along the route of time and requires us also to be continually acting. All action is an encroachment on the future.

"To retain what no longer is, to anticipate what as yet is not,—these are the primary functions of consciousness. . . . Consciousness is then, as it were, the hyphen which joins what has been to what will be, the bridge which spans the past and the future. But what purpose does the bridge serve? What is consciousness called on to do?

"In order to reply to the question, let us inquire what beings are conscious and how far in nature the domain of consciousness extends. But let us not insist that the evidence shall be complete, precise and mathematical; if we do we shall get nothing. To know with scientific certainty that a particular being is conscious, we should have to enter into it, coincide with it, be it. It is literally impossible for you to prove, either by experience or by reasoning, that I, who am speaking to you at this moment, am a conscious being. I may be an ingeniously constructed natural automaton. . . . Yet you will agree that though it is not impossible that I am an unconscious automaton, it is very improbable."

Just as we should be entirely mistaken if we assumed that because in ourselves digestion was directly connected with a stomach, therefore only beings with stomachs could digest, so, "in like manner, consciousness in man is unquestionably connected with the brain, but it by no means follows that a brain is indispensable to consciousness. . . . Theoretically, then, everything living might be conscious. *In principle*, consciousness is co-extensive with life. Now is it so *in fact?* Does not consciousness, occasionally, fall asleep or slumber? This is probable, and here is a second line of facts which leads to this conclusion.

"In the living being which we know best, it is by means of the brain that consciousness works. Let us then cast a glance at the human brain and see how it functions. The brain is part of a nervous system which includes, together with the brain proper, the spinal cord, the nerves, etc. In the spinal cord there are mechanisms set up, each of which contains, ready to start, a definite complicated action which the body can carry out at will, just as the rolls of perforated paper which are used in the pianola mark out beforehand the tunes which the instru-

Digitized by Google

ment will play. Each of these mechanisms can be set working directly by an external cause: the body, then, at once responds to the stimulus received by executing a number of intercoordinated movements. But in some cases the stimulus, instead of obtaining immediately a more or less complicated reaction from the body by addressing itself directly to the spinal cord, mounts first to the brain, then redescends and calls the mechanism of the spinal cord into play after having made the brain intervene. Why is this indirect path taken? What purpose is served by the intervention of the brain? We may easily guess, if we consider the general structure of the nervous system. The brain is in a general relation to all the mechanisms in the spinal cord and not only to some particular one among them; also it receives every kind of stimulus, not only certain special kinds. It is therefore a crossway, where the nervous impulse arriving by any sensory path can be directed into any motor path. Or, if you prefer, it is a commutator, which allows the current received from one point of the organism to be switched in the direction of any motor contrivance. When the stimulus, then, instead of following the direct path, goes off to the brain, it is evidently in order that it may set in action a motor mechanism which has been chosen, instead of one which is automatic. The spinal cord contains a great number of ready-formed responses to the question which the circumstances address to it; the intervention of the brain secures that the most appropriate among them shall be given. The brain is an organ of choice."

As we descend in the scale of the animal series we can see this faculty of choosing still present but less and less pronounced, till automatism and choice seem fused into one. "The reaction is now so simple that it appears almost mechanical; it still hesitates and gropes, however, as though it would be voluntary. . . . This, then, is what we find along the second line of facts. It reinforces the conclusion we had come to before: for if, as we said, consciousness retains the past and anticipates the future, it is probably because it is called on to make a choice. In order to choose, we must know what we can do and remember the consequences, advantageous or injurious, of what we have already done; we must foresee and we must remember. And now we are going to see that our first conclusion, reinforced by this new line of facts, supplies an intelligible answer to the question before us: are all living beings conscious or does consciousness cover a part only of the domain of life? . . . It appears to me therefore extremely likely that consciousness, originally immanent in all that lives, is dormant where there is no longer spontaneous movement, and awakens when life tends to free activity. We can verify the law in ourselves. What happens when one of our actions ceases to be spontaneous and becomes automatic? Consciousness departs from it. In learning an exercise, for example, we begin by being conscious of each of the movements we execute. Why? Because we originate the action, because it is the result of a decision and implies a choice. Then gradually, as the movements become more and more linked

Digitized by Google

together and more and more determine one another mechanically, dispensing us from the need of choosing and deciding, the consciousness of them diminishes and disappears. On the other hand, when is it that our consciousness attains its greatest liveliness? Is it not at those moments of inward crisis when we hesitate between two, or it may be several, different courses to take, when we feel that our future will be what we make it? The variations in the intensity of our consciousness seem then to correspond to the more or less considerable sum of choice, or, as I would say, to the amount of creation, which our conduct requires. Everything leads us to believe that it is thus with consciousness in general. If consciousness means memory and anticipation, it is because consciousness is synonymous with choice."

Looking thus to the movement of life within ourselves, where it is most brightly lit for us and most easily traceable, we see it marked by two contrasting tendencies and following two divergent paths. The first path is that of free will, of conscious choice and purpose, meeting the environment about us in a way which we choose anew with each action. This is the path of constant creation; for to each event and circumstance we add something that was not there before,—an element of our own free will, the way we *choose* to deal with it, and this element of ourselves which we put into it makes it other than it was before. Also, it makes us other than we were before; for we have chosen to draw, from the infinite reservoir of our potential being, a definite element to make actual and manifest; and as this continues in choice after choice, the self is created by the self, and the tide of conscious life and volition increases in depth and intensity by each new act of will.

But the second tendency is no less clearly observable in our proneness to deal with similar events in similar ways—so that when we have once chosen and acted in response to any group of stimuli or circumstances, their recurrence finds us predisposed to repeat the same reaction. This is the path of habit, in which the free and conscious choice which we originally brought to bear upon events, progressively gives way to an automatic repetition of the past; and our *action,* which was at first free and purposed, becomes the mere mechanical *reaction* from an external stimulus. Here consciousness ceases to function, and, ceasing to function, withdraws.

Bergson suggests that these two tendencies, which we see opposed, yet coexisting and reconciled in our own nature, give us the key to the universal relation of mind and body, consciousness and matter.

"Let us then," he says, "imagine living matter in its elementary form, such as it may have been when it first appeared: a simple mass of protoplasmic jelly like the amœba, which can undergo change of form at will, and is therefore vaguely conscious. Now, for it to grow and evolve, there are two ways open. It may take the path toward movement and action,—movement growing ever more effective, action growing

Digitized by Google

freer and freer. The path toward movement involves risk and adventure, but also it involves consciousness with its growing degrees of intensity and depth. It may take the other path, it may abandon the faculty of acting and choosing, the potentiality of which it carries within it, may accommodate itself to obtain from the spot where it is all it requires for its support, instead of going abroad to seek it. Existence is then assured to it, a tranquil, unenterprising existence, but this existence is also torpor, the first effect of immobility: the torpor soon becomes fixed; this is unconsciousness. These are the two paths which lie open before the evolution of life. Living matter finds itself committed partly to the one path, partly to the other. Speaking generally, the first path may be said to mark the direction of the animal world (we have to qualify it, because many animal species renounce movement and with it probably consciousness also); the second may be said to mark the direction of the vegetable world (again it has to be qualified, for mobility, and therefore probably consciousness also, may occasionally be awakened in plants).

"When, now, we reflect on this bias or tendency of life at its entry into the world, we see it bringing something which encroaches on inert matter. The world left to itself obeys fatalistic laws. In determinate conditions matter behaves in a determinate way. Nothing it does is unforeseeable. Were our science complete and our calculating power infinite, we should be able to predict everything which will come to pass in the inorganic material universe, in its mass and in its elements, as we predict an eclipse of the sun or moon. Matter is inertia, geometry, necessity. But with life there appears free, predictable [unpredictable?], movement. The living being chooses or tends to choose. Its role is to create. In a world where everything else is determined, a zone of indetermination surrounds it. To create the future requires preparatory action in the present, to prepare what will be is to utilize what has been: life therefore is employed from its start in conserving the past and anticipating the future in a duration in which past, present and future tread one on another, forming an indivisible continuity. Such memory, such anticipation, are consciousness itself. This is why, in right if not in fact, consciousness is co-extensive with life."

Let us turn here for a moment from Bergson's pages to follow further, and for ourselves, some of the thoughts to which they give rise. And first of this inert matter, which is "geometry, necessity," reacting in unchanging, determinate ways to determinate conditions,—does it not now appear as but the forms into which past conscious life has crystallized, having surrendered itself wholly to habit? We see it as the skandhas of a past manvantara, the sediment left from innumerable distillations of consciousness through an infinite sequence of repeated acts. Is this vision purely fanciful? Is it absurd to think that we may see, in the various properties of matter, the types of habit into which conscious life tends to pass when choice and volition are surrendered?

Digitized by Google

We have no answer, yet imagination plays upon the theme. Here is the solid impenetrable rock, the condensed "no" which consciousness has said to the pressure put upon it, until resistance has become the law of its being; here, too, the facile acquiescence of the fluid, taking whatever mould and shape it finds around it, till it has none of its own; and locked within them all, in each and every form that matter has, are the tremendous energies that have been compressed and rendered latent there by the endlessly repeated thrust in one direction of what was first a conscious will. The material universe is presented to us as but the fixed habits of being, where life acts automatically, and consciousness is dormant through lack of volition.

But what is of far more moment to us than such abstract speculations upon the universe as a whole, is the light which we may find to throw upon our own life as conscious beings. To Bergson the very essence of consciousness is choice, volition, free, creative will. Where these exist and grow, consciousness exists and grows. Where they are surrendered, consciousness withdraws; and we have seen that this surrender occurs whenever we act from habit rather than from will.

If we turn to the dictionary we shall find the word "habit" to be derived from the Latin *habitus,* "condition, state, appearance, dress, attire," and that it is defined, first, as "a usual or characteristic state or condition," and second, as "a usual or customary mode of action, particularly a mode of action so established by use as to be entirely natural, involuntary, instinctive, unconscious, uncontrollable, etc." The suggestion is, therefore, inherent in the word itself, that our customary mode of action forms the dress or attire of the self, and that in the "involuntary, instinctive and unconscious" action of habit we find all the properties of a material body. We are thus led to consider the vesture or body of the self, on each plane of being from the most subtile to the most physical, as woven by the self from its own past choice and acts.

In this view, so far from consciousness being a product of its body, the body is but a product of consciousness; and instead of consciousness being dependent upon the activities of the body, these activities represent with precision the region in which consciousness is limited, surrendered or withdrawn, and where the free choice and will of the self have been replaced by the mechanical reactions of habit, or of habit crystallized into substance. Death, then, can no longer appear to us as the destroyer, but as the liberator; freeing us from the body that limited our consciousness and confined our power of will and choice, it restores to consciousness its pristine freedom and completeness. As we look out upon physical life and death, in the light of this new concept of the nature and relations of consciousness and matter, we see how simple and inevitable is the truth of many mystic sayings that before were dark and contradictory. Quite literally and obviously, "in the midst of life we are in death," caught in the snare of matter, held fast in habit, and only as

Digitized by Google

"we die daily," abandoning each form as we create it, do we keep the freedom which is the life and essence of consciousness.

It is now no longer Bergson, but the age-old teaching of the saints and seers and mystics which holds and guides our thought. The theosophic attitude and method have played their part and led us to the gates which open only to its ethical spirit and religious life. Yet by what Bergson has shown us we may interpret more clearly the messages that come back to us from those that have passed through—who speak with the surety of personal knowledge and experience, but in terms which are too often foreign to our untrained understanding.

What is it that they tell us? They waste no time in arguing whether the soul is mortal or immortal, whether consciousness survives or perishes with the body. They know; there is no question here. What concerns them, what they strive with passionate earnestness to make clear to all who will listen to them, is that immortal life can be entered from where we stand; that we do not need to wait for death to set us free, but may claim the freedom of the soul even here and now; that the chains of the body can be loosened, even as a habit can be discarded and cast aside. And the way is simple. We have but to claim and use again our power of volition; to meet each event, each circumstance, not with the automatic, mechanical reaction of old habit, but with a new and purposeful act of choice, determining our course by the will of the soul, not by the inertia of our past.

What does it mean when we are told that we must become as little children—and that of such is the kingdom of heaven? There are many meanings; but one stands out sharply in the light of our present thought. To the child all things are new; and each new event is met by a new creative act of will. Therefore the child grows apace in life, and his consciousness broadens and deepens year by year, almost moment by moment. Growth ceases only where habit begins; and the secret of immortal youth is in the constant pressing forward that rests in no achievement, however great, ever striving toward something higher, always willing something better, never content merely to remain on the level that has been reached. "Recollection and Detachment"—magical acts that open for us the portals of immortal life; for where they are practised no habit can endure, save only the habit that they themselves constitute: the habit of growth, the habit of freedom and will; the body of the resurrection, donned while yet we live. "Dying daily," death is needless. At its touch the physical drops away; but nothing of the self remains imprisoned in it, caught in the circle of necessity, which habit constitutes.

But let us return again to Bergson. Perhaps he does not speak with the authority of the theosophic life; yet freedom of the intellect is won by the same process that gains the freedom of the soul, and Bergson's intellect is preeminently free. Here he speaks of what he knows—

Digitized by Google

though his knowledge be confined to a single plane, so that even his most creative and stimulating work seems thin in comparison with the simple records of the saints, whose lives were whole. But few people understand the records of the saints, and some, who do not, may perhaps understand Bergson. Let us consider therefore his description of how life may go about the conquest of matter, realizing that it is our own problem, if we would follow where the saints and seers have led.

"Consciousness and matter appear to us, then, as radically different forms of existence, even as antagonistic forms, which have to find a *modus vivendi*. Matter is necessity, consciousness is freedom; but though diametrically opposed to one another, life has found the way of reconciling them. This is precisely what life is,—freedom inserting itself within necessity, turning it to its profit. Life would be an impossibility were the determinism of matter so absolute as to admit no relaxation. Suppose, however, that at particular moments and at particular points matter shows a certain elasticity, then and there will be the opportunity for consciousness to install itself. It will have to humble itself at first; yet, once installed, it will dilate; it will spread from its point of entry and not rest till it has conquered the whole, for time is at its disposal, and the slightest quantity of indetermination, by continually adding to itself, will make up as much freedom as you like."

We may read this as a description of the entrance of consciousness into matter at the dawn of the manvantara, or as a commentary upon the descent of the Manasaputras into the earth-born bodies prepared for them, but it is of far more interest and moment to us to apply it to our present position, where we have awakened to aspiration and desire for the things of the inner life, but are faced by formed habits which automatically determine the character of our thoughts and actions even against our will. As Bergson points out, were this determination indeed absolute, our case would be hopeless. But it never is complete. Always there is some point of elasticity, some measure of freedom of choice. There we may set our aspiration and good resolution to work. It is, indeed, at first a very humbling process. The Lord of Heaven is born into the world as a helpless infant, needing to be ceaselessly tended, regularly nourished. We aspire to discipleship, to know and serve the Masters of Wisdom, to win the secrets of immortal life, and we find that we cannot even control our resentment when our vanity is pricked, keep our hands away from our face, or cease from mispronouncing a word. These are as yet too great tasks for us; in those directions we are still too bound by habit; and we must begin where habit is less compelling and our freedom greater. Perhaps the most we can do is to resolve to suppress our resentment, even if we must feel it; and we bend our energies to keeping silent under provocation. It is a pitiably small thing in the light of our great ambition, and it is still more humiliating when we fail in it time after time. But each conquest loosens the whole hold

Digitized by Google

of habit on our conscious life, and from such a point of entry our will may work, growing daily stronger, and little by little extending the scope of its effort, till it is able to uncover and attack the central citadel of self-love from which the evil comes. Once that citadel falls, and the *habit* of self-reference and self-love is broken, we know a measure of freedom that makes us other than we were. We recognize that we have found the Path and the power to move, however slowly and haltingly, along it.

We cannot, in the scope of this article, follow Bergson even through the first lecture—the opening chapter of the book—which we have taken as the text for our discussion. It is true that we have turned from it to follow at greater length our own thought, which it prompted. But that is the way in which such writings as Bergson's must be read. Their value lies not only in the author's thought, but even more in their power to inspire and stimulate the thought of the reader. We pay them no higher compliment than when they rest forgotten in our hands, while our mind pursues its own search for truth along the avenues they opened out to us. We have said enough to show what may be expected from the book itself, and something of the bearing of some of its conclusions upon the question of immortality and the survival of the personality after physical death. But we cannot resist adding two further quotations: the one, to correct any impression that because Bergson's own achievement appears to have been primarily intellectual, he is indifferent to the higher claims of the moral life (and let us not forget that Bergson has probably done more than any other modern thinker to restore to philosophy a just emphasis on the will, and to show that it is the application of wisdom, not merely knowledge, which philosophy should give us); and the second, to contrast Bergson's view of memory with that of Dr. M'Taggart, which we considered in a previous paper, and to show the agreement of their conclusion as to the survival of consciousness after physical death.

"The standpoint of the moralist is higher. In man alone, especially among the best of mankind, the vital movement pursues its way without hindrance, thrusting through that work of art, the human body, which it has created on its way, the creative current of the moral life. Man, called on at every moment to lean on the totality of his past in order to bring his weight to bear more effectively on the future, is the great success of life. But it is the moral man who is a creator in the highest degree,—the man whose action, itself intense, is also capable of intensifying the action of other men, and, itself generous, can kindle fires on the hearths of generosity. The men of moral grandeur, particularly those whose inventive and simple heroism has opened new paths to virtue, are revealers of metaphysical truth. Although they are the culminating point of evolution, they are nearest the source and they enable us to perceive the impulsion which comes from the deep. It is in studying these great lives, *in striving to experience sympathetically what they*

Digitized by Google

experience [italics ours], that we may penetrate by an act of intuition to the life principle itself. To pierce the mystery of the deep, it is sometimes necessary to regard the heights. It is earth's hidden fire which appears at the summit of the volcano."

* * * * *

"I believe that our whole psychical existence is something just like this single sentence [which though spoken word by word must be held as a unit present to the mind, or the thread of meaning would be lost], continued since the first awakening of consciousness, interspersed with commas, but never broken by full stops. And consequently I believe that our whole past still exists. It exists subconsciously, by which I mean that it is present to consciousness in such a manner that, to have the revelation of it, consciousness has no need to go out of itself or seek for foreign assistance; it has but to remove an obstacle, to withdraw a veil, in order that all that it contains, all in fact that it actually is, may be revealed. Fortunate are we to have this obstacle, infinitely precious to us is the veil! The brain is what secures to us this advantage. It keeps our attention fixed on life; and life looks forward; it looks back only in the degree to which the past can aid it to illumine and prepare the future. To live is, for the mind, essentially to concentrate itself on the action to be accomplished. To live is to be inserted in things by means of a mechanism which draws from consciousness all that is utilizable in action, all that can be acted on the stage, and darkens the greater part of the rest. Such is the brain's part in the work of memory: it does not serve to preserve the past, but primarily to mask it, then to allow only what is practically useful to emerge through the mask. Such, too, is the part the brain plays in regard to the mind generally. Extracting from the mind what is externalizable in movement, inserting the mind into this motor frame, it causes it to limit its vision, but also it makes its action efficacious. This means that the mind overflows the brain on all sides, and that cerebral activity responds only to a very small part of mental activity.

"But this also means that mental life cannot be an effect of bodily life, that it looks much more as if the body were simply made use of by the mind, and that we have, therefore, no reason to suppose the body and the mind united inseparably to one another. . . . But if, as I have tried to show, the mental life overflows the cerebral life, if the brain does but translate into movements a small part of what takes place in consciousness, then survival becomes so probable that the onus of proof falls on him who denies it rather than on him who affirms it; for the only reason we can have for believing in the extinction of consciousness at death is that we see the body become disorganized, that this is a fact of experience, and the reason loses its force if the independence of almost the whole of consciousness with regard to the body has been shown to be also a fact of experience."

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

Digitized by Google

WHAT WE ALL KNOW

WHY talk about what we all know? Simply because it is of the utmost practical importance to us. It is far more important than either the things we are keenly interested in finding out, or those in the next further layer which we have not yet glimpsed,—and so should hail as wholly new discoveries. We might as well admit the facts—exploration appeals to most of us, especially when it can be done at second hand, following someone else's account of discoveries. Conquest is another matter. It does not awaken the same appeal. The very word makes one begin to feel uncomfortable —it has such an angular aspect. Perhaps this is one reason why what we know lacks interest for us. The next step is so evidently along the conquest route. We prefer rather to garner more information. Lean and hungry cooks, surrounded with all the materials for producing nourishing food, lacking only the will to compound and bake them: that is one picture of a condition we should be able to recognize as very like our own. You can see, with a little imagination, that ill-nourished cook-person running around the garden, looking for new flavours to use, new vegetables to add a final dash of excellence to the pot, but never putting the pot over the fire;—not quite ready to do the one thing needed, which is to use what is at hand.

Words as Screens

In case the structure of modern civilization should, as some are anticipating, be shaken over, and fall into ruins,—there will be in it one gain for the disciple of the next generation. There will be great simplification. Now, we have so many words, so much machinery of life behind which to hide; we so seldom face facts as they are, even when we are alone with ourselves! Something or somebody (for these elementals are very personal), in the congeries we call "self", gets uncomfortable, and tries to turn the conversation that is going on within us, as soon as we begin to deal with fact. Usually it succeeds; and the result is that when we look things over with anyone else, honesty of thought and expression are so rare that memory readily holds the record of all those fruitful occasions. The other extreme, to which we sometimes react, is surely equally stupid. We say, Let us face the facts;—and grimly begin to burrow, like rodents. For the moment, we pretend to believe that only the mud and grime and rubble in our natures are *real;* we face them as our realities and have a bad half-hour. Then common sense comes to our rescue, we clutch its hand to pull us up out of the mire,—and quickly drop it and run off, to find some way of forgetting what we saw. It would be far wiser to stand by, and to get the rest of the picture. Often we get that more clearly by watching others.

Digitized by Google

Friends as Sign-posts

A sympathetic observation of the struggles of a fellow-student may reveal much. Even the attempt is illuminating. Do we hesitate to try? Do we say, "Oh, I never know what things mean?" There is a clue;—*why* this unwillingness to make the effort?

I have one friend who would answer:—"That is such a slow process. My conclusions would be sure to be wrong. Then by the time I had discovered where they were wrong and tried another interpretation,—so much time would be lost. I should never get anywhere." This friend is always looking for "short-cuts". Let a new angle of an accepted truth be presented, and it is by this person eagerly received as a probable short-cut to the acquirement of some quality that is now being painfully striven after. Eternity, on this friend's map, would appear to be checkered with short-cuts, known to and carefully concealed by the elect;—effortless approaches to the heights of heaven, the exhilaration of the altitude without the struggle of the climb. Surely those are ways imagined only by the valley-folk, who have not yet dared the steeps, known to them only by sight, and so not known at all. It could not be thus that Masters reached their commanding position, nor with such ideals that they attempt new conquests, always fresh dangers. My friend's eagerness for a deceptive ease of attainment ought not to annoy me, as it too often does. It stands out bold and clear, at that particular fork of the road like a warning sign-post. It tells me how foolish I am when I turn away from the effort and sustained determination which right self-identification often require. Is one annoyed with the man who nailed up the sign warning of a dangerous quicksand at the side of the road?

Another friend to whom I am much indebted gets stalled at a different spot. It amuses me to liken it to the problem of the boy whose voice is "changing";—that boy may start a salutation in his nice new deep voice, and find it ending in an embarrassingly shrill pipe. It happens that my changing-voice friend has been making a special study of obedience, as one of the great virtues exemplified in the lives of seers and saints, great and little. There is a genuine admiration for the fruits of obedience, and a real desire to travel by that road. Indeed much ground there has been covered, but beware of any sudden demand! Let conscience, or some natural authority on the outside, give a quick word of command—and, squeak, squeak goes the childish protest. This usually is voiced in the form of a determination to be obedient even to the point of martyrdom; *only* this, and *only* that, and as many more *onlys* as there is space for before the tear drops begin to splash. Yet, constantly as this little drama is repeated, my friend does not yet see in it the part played by self-will; does not even suspect that none could give command to one who has not yet been broken to the obediences of conscience and daily custom. It is clear to the onlooker that an obedient heart, a wholly obedient heart, would find no problem, no obstacle in the various situations

Digitized by Google

which to this friend of mine are so cruelly complex and make plain obedience seem so impossible. Instead of wondering why she "acts up" so foolishly, let me be grateful for another sign post, in the labyrinth of our common human nature. This one says, Make sure you are eager to obey before you count the obstacles.

Real Needs

What do we really need? Looking within my own heart, or recalling the registered demands made by others,—the answer is the same. We all have teaching enough. Any one, out of dozens of the books we have, gives that. They but repeat the truths given out, now from one angle and then from another; show them flat, or in relief. They are like the maps printed by the railroads,—the territory covered by the road is shown with all the intersecting lines that cross it; but broad and clear, as though nature's own chosen route, stands out the line of the company that prints the map. One sees it as the best possible way to travel. So each of our books points out one or more best ways. The desire, however, is not so much to induce travelling by that route alone. What the wise ones most desire is to awaken the will to set forth, the desire to adventure on any charted route. Yes, we have knowledge enough.

We are rich, too, in examples. Take the simple, unassuming life of Mr. Judge, with the light thrown upon it by his *Letters,* Volumes I and II. We have there sufficient applied wisdom to meet every need. Sometimes I have been tempted to rearrange those two books, with scissors and paste pot, on the plan of the old fashioned health guide, called the Family Doctor, or some such title. That tells you:—"If feverish, stop eating; drink a gallon of water; take a big dose of herb-tea, and sleep twelve hours." In equally simple fashion, but with far greater discrimination, Mr. Judge prescribes for the soul's disorders, particularly those due to the over-feeding of Lower Manas, and to failure to give the will the constant exercise that makes it a supple, responsive instrument. Our only need, it seems to me, is there,—the need of more will, more desire. But, after all, that is equivalent to saying that all a house-carpenter needs is a completed house. Building houses is his trade—building will and desire might be called the trade of the disciple;—neither builds for his own use. He builds that there may be more of his commodity for use in the world.

Three Wishes

Suppose you were offered three wishes, as in one of the oldest type of fairytale. For what would you wish first? This is not so simple as it sounds. The situation is one common to the fairylore of many peoples, written in many languages. Suddenly appears the fairy magician; as quickly the three wishes are made;—and the fortunate one is soon rubbing his eyes, for he finds that with three fair chances to get anything he wished, it is all over, and he has nothing at all. Unlimited

Digitized by Google

as the offer was, he was never left healthy, wealthy and wise. One of the oldest versions of this particular story is that in which the gift-fairy made her offer to a poor old husband and wife. The wife put in the first word:—"I wish", she cried, "that I might always have all the porridge I could eat." Annoyed at such trifling with their great opportunity, the husband said, as the porridge pots began to run over,—"I wish you had a bag of it on the end of your nose!" He had meant only to reprove, but he had used the fateful words "I wish", and instantly there appeared the pudding bag firmly attached to her nose. There was then no choice, the third and last wish had to be used to free the wife from that unsightly ornament. The fairy vanished, and they faced one another, no whit better off than they were before all the treasures of the Earth had three times been laid in their hands. Why? Perhaps the fairy gift bore the power to call forth the dominating desire, instead of some well-calculated, prearranged demand.

If the opportunity came to us, what would be our "wishes"? Many of us might in fact say, with all speed:—"I wish to know the Masters." What is our picture when we think, with radiant anticipation, of the happiness of knowing a Master? Maybe an image of ourselves, in our very best guise, both inside and out, standing comfortably in a circle of Masters and their chêlas, listening reverently to their conversation on some lofty theme,—after having been welcomed with the kind and gracious words in which such loving beings would surely express their recognition of a stranger's presence. How smoothly and happily life would flow on were one permitted frequent entrance into such company. Or if alone with one's own Master, what companionship! All one's feelings would of course be understood and respected, all the hurts and jars removed. All would be love, sweetness, charm.

One Who Dreamed True

How does that dream fit the facts that have been given us? Does anybody recall passages in H. P. B.'s writing that lend colour to any such idealistic setting? What of the saints who had close personal direction by the Master Jesus? One whose name naturally comes to mind is the recently canonized Margaret Mary. Her letters, written to one or another superior of her Order, are full of references to the, as she said, "unmerited" favours and expressions of tenderness that the Master lavished upon her. Equally prominent and far more readily accepted by her, are accounts of the manner in which she was disciplined by the Master for the most trifling infraction of the Rule of her Order, for any slightest manifestation of a flaw in the perfect and complete obedience that was characteristic of her. There was nothing of democracy in that relation between French nun and Master; nothing of that easy friendship and readily flowing intimacy which many pictures of such privileges require. Unsparingly, and in terse terms, her shortcomings were pointed out to her. If told what to do, perfect performance was

Digitized by Google

expected, and severe punishment followed any delays or lapses,—punishment devised by wise tenderness to be deeply felt and fully remedial in her particular case. It was the combination of tenderness and unsparing severity, the incessant demand for one's best effort, richly rewarded when fully given, that is, in our human experience, typified by the ideal parent and child. There can be no doubt of the allure, the consuming desire for complete union which this Master called forth in the heart of the one who described herself,—as consumed with such a thirst for union that nothing on earth could satisfy this longing.

But who is ready for the terms? We fear that frequently the second "wish" would be this—"Free me from such companionship. Its demands are too much for me!" And the third "wish" might be,—"Let me forget the sight of myself that came as I stood before the Master." Is that the experience of those to whom such companionship has been accorded? Not so far as any records go; quite the opposite. And naturally so, as it would be vouchsafed only to those who had grown out of the nursery, who were able to lose themselves, to give themselves, in a profound love.

To us, still nurslings, what does such a record as that of Margaret Mary offer? For one thing, a new type of ideal; a truer, more compelling picture of what real companionship with a Master means,—the necessary demand on his part for likeness; the insistence that the disciple shall live by the laws of the Master-degree:—the rare adventure of such an effort, the hunger and thirst to satisfy his demands which make the sweetness and delight of toil and pain. That, however, is on the heights. Less is demanded of, and so less can be given to, one of lower degree. But there is record of one such whose knowledge of his Master was equally clear and sure. He was generous enough to relate his first distinct consciousness of his Master. It was not some lofty or tender interview that was first accorded to him. He had been praying, agonizing over a situation that gave him great distress; had asked the Master's help—had asked for light on his duty. Within his heart came, he tells us, the response which he later paraphrased in these words: "What do you want *me* to do about it? What *can* I do about it?" It was his Master, and he knew it. The problem so perplexing was clear to him now. He saw that he had to pick up his load and carry it; that under the intense eyes of his newly-found Master, no shirking, no lamenting of his fate could be tolerated. Later, as he told the story, that same cross lifted with much foreboding, became his joy, his deepest delight.

This, too, we all know to be profoundly true, far more real than our reluctances, fears, hesitations; and we are responsible for what we know.

E.

Digitized by Google

ESCAPE OR ACHIEVEMENT*

"THEY change their skies, but not their natures, who cross the seas",—so runs the proverb; and doubtless many of us can bear witness that it is as true to-day as when it fell from the lips of the wise Roman of old.

"What must I do to be saved?" was the cry, when tossed on the stormy and uncharted ocean of orthodoxy: "Where shall I find a pilot?" signals the vessel, hove-to off the entrance to the fair haven of Theosophy.

One who, while serving his country gallantly on many a hard-fought field, yet strove according to his lights to be loyal to Him whom he regarded as his Heavenly Master, was wont to say that if he "could just squeeze inside of the Golden Gate," he would be entirely content. Before indulging in the smile of superiority at this honest, if lowly, confession, it might be well to examine whether this is not our own real, though possibly unconscious, attitude; whether, when we say "*Must* I give up this?", or, "Is it *necessary* to do that?", we really do not mean, "How much of this world's pleasures may I venture to indulge in? how close can I point to windward without being taken aback?" in other words, "Can I do this, or enjoy that, and yet just squeeze inside?"

Assuming, however, that the inquiry is made in sincerity and good faith, it is evident that the answer must depend upon the reply that the seeker makes to the question addressed to him in turn, "What is your object in life—to avoid an imaginary punishment, to obtain in the future a definite and limited reward? or to enter, now and here, upon a path of ever-increasing wisdom, knowledge, and peace, of inconceivable splendour and limitless extent? is your aim negative or positive? in a word, is it Escape or Achievement?"

Now from the standpoint of official Christianity, the attitude of the simple-hearted soldier is not only entirely logical, but thoroughly satisfactory: and if we also are of this way of thinking—if, as the *Bhagavad Gita* says, we prefer "a transient enjoyment of heaven to eternal absorption",—doubtless in Devachan we shall find fulness of joy; "Those who worship the Devatas go unto the Devatas".

But to those strong souls whose passionate longing is to find "the small, old path"; who disdain the gentler slopes which the feeble must

* Reprinted from *The Path*, vol. III, p. 150 (August, 1888).

Digitized by Google

needs follow; whose eyes seek the snowy pinnacle rather than the smiling valley, though it were the Land of Beulah itself; who, far from desiring the enjoyment of Devachan, regard it rather as a halt in their progress, a loss of time, so to speak, and would gladly forego its delights in order to reincarnate at once and continue without interruption their work for the good of the race;—what answer shall be returned them? Obviously none; since, for them, such questions never arise. They ask not, What *shall* I give up? but, What *can* I?; not, What indulgence *must* I deny myself? but, What encumbrance can I cast aside, that I may the more swiftly and easily mount?

It was said by One of old time, "Ye cannot serve two masters." God and Mammon were instances cited by the Teacher, but the saying holds true of any given opposite or conflicting aims. And the great trouble is that, although we may be unwilling to admit it even to ourselves, very few of us are really single-hearted: whether from physical infirmity, so-called hereditary tendency, or Karmic environment, matters not so far as regards the fact and the inevitable consequences resulting therefrom. Possibly all that many of us can accomplish in this incarnation will be in the nature of a species of compromise, or perhaps, more correctly, a net result,—a sort of moral diagonal of forces, so to speak, the resultant of the opposing tendencies of our earthly attractions and spiritual aspirations.

But he whose aim is single, whose eye never loses sight of the end, acts on his plane as the successful man of business on his: do we ever hear the latter ask, "Must I stay in my office eight hours a day? is it absolutely necessary to miss this race, or forego that dinner, in order to close this contract or elaborate that plan?" Does he not rather work fourteen, or sixteen hours, give up recreation, literary, artistic, social, even to a great extent the joys of the home circle, tax his ingenuity to the uttermost to devise new openings, find fresh fields for enterprise?

Perhaps it might be laid down broadly that any question prefaced by "must" should be answered in the negative; for the fact of its being put in that form proclaims, louder than words, that not yet is the seeker able to free himself from attachment; and until he can do this—until, as is said in *Through the Gates of Gold,* he can place the object before him, and clearly, coolly, and dispassionately examine it from all points of view, fully admitting its attractions as well as recognizing its drawbacks, and then calmly, deliberately, without a trace of regret or a sigh of longing, dismiss the very idea from his heart,—until he can do all this, forcible repression by mere strength of will avails nothing; the desire, coerced at one point, returns with accumulated strength at another; if not on the physical plane, then on the mental; if not in this incarnation, then in another. This is the teaching of all the ages, from the *Upanishads* to *Light on the Path,*—of the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Bible, of Buddha and Jesus alike. Nothing that is done as a penance, as a so-called "mortification of the flesh," or merely out of deference to the

Digitized by Google

feelings, or opinions or prejudices of others, can be of any real value to the man himself.

One who makes a virtue of refusing to play cards in the social circle, while still having the desire in his heart, may yet lose money and reputation in Wall street; he who, against his own judgment, is persuaded to deprive himself of the comfort resulting from the rational use of tobacco, may wreck his nerves by inordinate indulgence in strong tea,—and this without incurring the censure of clergymen, reformers, or old women of either sex. In this, as in all things, we may learn from the working of Nature. The tree yields fruit not only after its kind, but in its own due time. There is neither haste nor delay in her evolutionary methods,—first the blossom and then the fruit, is her unvarying rule: and, knowing this, we do not expect to pluck the matured ear of July from the tender shoot of April: we rejoice in the budding sweetness of the vineyard in the joyous Springtide, untroubled by any anxiety lest the golden glory of September should fail to ripen the purple clusters.

So in our daily round and occupation, everything comes in its appointed time and refuses to be hurried: sculptured granite is no more immovable than the Express, a second before its flying wheels begin to turn; as the hand on the dial points to the hour, the ingenious mechanism of the time-lock swings back the massive doors of the vault which, a moment before, would have defied the strength of a hundred men to open.

"And what shall I do with my sword?" asked the brilliant young courtier of George Fox, by whose teachings he had become converted to Quakerism. "Friend", replied the wise and courteous man of peace, "wear it,—as long as thou canst!"; but full soon William Penn counted it all joy to exchange jewelled sword and velvet coat for the simple garb of the people with whom he had cast in his lot. And when the day comes —as come it must, in the fulness of time—when we are ready, in this spirit, to lay everything on the altar, whether choice possessions or valued opinions, favorite habits or cherished beliefs, our so-called virtues not less than what are termed our vices; when we can do all this, not as a sacrifice, but with joy and gladness, when our songs of deliverance are borne upon the upwreathing incense; then we, likewise, shall be no longer perplexed by the "must" or the "shall", for we shall then be treading the King's Highway of Achievement, and not scuffling along the back alleys of Escape.

Let us then be ever on guard lest aught tempt us from that "Middle Road" which the Lord Buddha pointed out to us, and in which we know our feet to be set; and by following it in all patience and loyalty, with dauntless will and unswerving devotion, we shall in his own time—which is always the best time—come to realize the portion which he has assured us shall be that of all who truly love and serve him.

"By few or many steps such shall attain
Nirvana's blest abode."

B. N. Acle, F. T. S.

Digitized by Google

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE variety of topics covered was amazing. Our visitor was young, was feminine, and had an inquiring mind. Let us say that the questions scintillated. For lack of space, very few of them, or their answers, can be recorded.

"Do members of The Theosophical Society approve of dancing?" That was the first. I heard someone gasp. But he pulled himself together, and began furiously to wonder whether he approved of dancing or not. He had forgotten. Perhaps to gain time (it was the Engineer), he explained that members of the Society are not expected to see, and in fact do not see, eye to eye in regard to such matters, and that membership does not imply belief in any dogma or theory whatsoever. He read aloud the first and only binding object of the Society. Then, with considerable presence of mind, he turned to the Philosopher and asked him what he thought about dancing. The Philosopher glared at him, but answered cheerfully:

"It depends. Modern dancing I abhor. It is not only immodest; it is purposely immoral. Go back fifteen years or so, to the days of waltzing, and even then it was a queer proceeding. A man was introduced to a woman whom he had never seen before. After a preliminary bow, he grabbed her round the waist, grasped her free hand, pressed her firmly to his side, and did his best to whirl her round the room without colliding with other whirlers. If, instead of whirling, they had sat down in a similar attitude—holding hands, with their arms around one another's waists—it would very properly have been regarded as an outrageous proceeding. Yet everyone danced, and no one thought anything about it. I am desperately old fashioned, and was brought up to think of women as sensitive and refined and innately modest. Just what they felt and thought about waltzing—if anything—I do not pretend to know. Their mothers taught them to do it, just as their mothers taught them to appear in public, once the lights were lit, with a large part of their anatomy exposed."

"Don't you approve of low-neck dresses?"

"It depends", answered the Philosopher, glaring once more at the Engineer. "I can remember the time (it feels like centuries ago) when a respectable girl, if her clothing had been torn in a ball room, to the extent of exposing her bare knees, would have fainted. It would not have been modest not to faint. But that same young lady wore nothing on her arms, very little on her back, while her bosom was only a degree more than half covered. . . . I infer that women are creatures of habit".

Digitized by Google

"But surely", inquired our visitor rather anxiously, "surely a woman's face is as revealing as her arms; and no one would suggest that she ought to keep her face covered!"

"Lots of people have suggested it, and lots of women do it and prefer to do it", the Philosopher retorted grimly. "But", he added, with gathering indignation, "it is not my business to tell women how to dress or how much of their person they ought to exhibit. I am not married. I have no daughters. And if other men are willing to let their women appear with only parts of themselves covered, it is their affair and not mine!"

We laughed. "There is nothing in the world more beautiful than a beautiful woman", said the Philosopher, as if this had some bearing on the subject. "Any attitude toward real beauty, which is less than that of reverence, is profanation, is a sort of sacrilege. How many people are there who reverence anything!"

But we were getting into deep water, particularly as we were not alone; so the Engineer, who by now had had ample time in which to orient himself, reproached the Philosopher with having sidetracked the subject. "I thought we were discussing dancing", he concluded.

"We were", answered the Philosopher. "Or, rather, you were good enough to ask me what I thought about it. Have you had time to find out what you think?"

"Yes", said the Engineer. "I have. And I have come to the conclusion that I approve enthusiastically of the Minuet. I am sure you would adore the Minuet" (this, to the Philosopher). "It is so graceful. And you would never have to touch more than the tips of a woman's fingers! . . . Seriously, I do think that such dances as the Minuet, while absolutely modest, provide exercise, amusement, and, incidentally, admirable training in deportment. They belong to an age when women, outwardly, at least, were treated with respect. Their revival might induce a similar condition in the women, and a similar attitude on the part of the men".

Our visitor, who has some modern notions, though not many, gazed at him suspiciously. "What do you mean", she asked, "by 'inducing a similar condition in the women'?"

"I mean", replied the Engineer, unabashed, "that if women hold their womanhood cheaply, men will take it at the same valuation".

"Young lady", interrupted the Philosopher, who feels strongly on this subject, "manners are not without meaning. The best of manners may conceal much that is evil, just as entire absence of manners may conceal much that is good. None the less, when the standard of manners deteriorates, you may be certain that loss of mutual respect accounts for it. And while the blame for this may be divided equally, in the eyes of God, between women and men, I am certain that anything in the nature of self-assertion on the part of women, just because it is essentially unfeminine, robs men, to that extent, of respect for them. A real

Digitized by Google

man does not admire a man who masquerades in petticoats; and if the sex of the man in petticoats happens, biologically, to be female, a real man finds it difficult to be ordinarily polite. The trouble seems to be that there are not many real men or real women alive at the present time. In the old days, if one man called another man a liar, one of the two had to die. As things now are, a man can call another man a liar and a thief to his face, all day and every day (it has happened among the highest officials of New York), and not even ink is spilled in consequence. This is partly because men, for good reason, have become indifferent to the opinion of women, while women no longer demand that a man shall be manly".

"A Pacifist would find evidence of progress in what you have said", the Student remarked quizzically.

"He would", replied the Philosopher; "and he would be right, if progress were to mean progress in Pacifism. Fortunately, it does not".

"Do Theosophists approve of the theatre?" inquired our visitor suddenly.

It was going to be difficult, we could see, to remove from this young person's mind the popular impression that members of The Theosophical Society accept some new creed,—and a creed, presumably, which covers mundane as well as celestial topics! We explained again that, in all probability, there were no two members of the Society whose opinion of the theatre could be the same. Then, by common consent, we appealed to the Historian to answer her question.

"On the understanding that I speak for myself only", he said, "I must confess that I do not like the theatre. The psychic atmosphere of most theatres is simply beastly. But even if the effect of a play on an audience were innocuous, which I could not admit, the question of the effect on the actors and actresses would have to be considered. And the effect on them, in my opinion, is very bad. A man who is willing to earn his living by making faces and pretending to be someone whom he is not, must be a poor creature to start with".

"Now really", interrupted the Student, "if that be your definition of acting, I shall be obliged to emphasize your statement that you speak for yourself only. One man paints Hamlet in colours; another carves him in stone, while a third acts him,—that is to say, brings him to life by means of voice, gesture and dress. And, of the three methods, each of which is an art, I should say that the third is by far the most vivid".

"On that theory", the Historian replied, "the woman who served as model for the Venus of Milo was as great an artist as the sculptor who immortalized her form in marble!"

"There is no analogy", said the Student. "An actor lives his part. He does not simply 'make up' to look it. He embodies the character, the feelings, the thoughts, of the person he represents".

"You mean that he plays at being the subject he portrays. He plays at being a hero or a villain as circumstances may require. He plays that

Digitized by Google

he is old or plays that he is young,—a Dane or a Moor or an English King. He plays to amuse others, for money".

"A musician who interprets the compositions of others, plays to amuse others, for money. What is the difference?"

"Even if there were no difference—and I believe there is—you have admitted, indirectly, from the very wording of your question, that the man who merely interprets the compositions of others, is not to be classed with the artist who creates. And, as I see it, art, really to be art, must be creative: it must result in giving permanent physical expression to something previously unseen or unheard".

"I doubt whether you are justified in limiting art to the production of permanent or lasting things. It seems to me that even a cook may be an artist,—and the products of a cook are made to disappear!"

"We are using words in different senses", said the Historian. "You would not rank even Ude, who left Lord Sefton's service because on one occasion a guest added pepper to his soup,—you would not rank Ude with Praxiteles or Michael Angelo. Nor can I believe that you would rank Sir Henry Irving with Tennyson, or with any of the great composers. I am prepared to grant that in one sense a cook may be an artist. But would you wish your son to earn his living as a cook, even supposing he could become the most artistic cook who ever lived? You might be willing to let him cook, as a hobby, a pastime; but you would not be willing to let him turn his pastime into a profession. In varying degree you might be willing, and even glad, to let him devote his spare time to baseball, or to amateur theatricals, or to playing the violin. But you would object strenuously, I believe, if he wished to earn his living by means of play. It would be demoralizing, and you know it".

Very eagerly our visitor asked: "How about women on the stage?" But at this critical moment the Ancient appeared on the scene, carrying with him a bulky envelope. "I am sorry to interrupt your discussion", he said, "but we ought to consider the recent Convention of the British national branch of The Theosophical Society. I have with me the report of its proceedings, and a mass of correspondence which has resulted".

Our visitor said good-bye. "What is it all about?" asked the Engineer, who works fourteen hours a day, and whose spare time is limited.

"It amounts to this", the Ancient replied: "Mr. Lincoln was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions. In that capacity he introduced a resolution endorsing the resolution which was passed unanimously last April, at the Convention in New York of the Society as a whole,—the resolution which is given on page 78 of the July, 1920, issue of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, and which reads as follows:

"'Pursuant to the action of the Executive Committee, and confirming the self-expulsion of certain German members, be it

"'Resolved, That the Charters of the Berlin Branch in Germany and of the Dresden Branch in Germany, are hereby cancelled, and that the Charters of all other Branches of The Theosophical Society, if any,

Digitized by Google

which adopt or approve the attitude of said Berlin and Dresden Branches shall at once be cancelled by the Executive Committee of the Society.

" 'Resolved, That all members of the Society who have endorsed the attitude of said German Branches are hereby expelled, and that all other members, if any, who may hereafter take similar action shall at once be expelled by the Executive Committee.'

"It appears that Mr. Lincoln's proposal to endorse the foregoing resolution met with active opposition, led by Mr. Kennedy, and that, to avoid open conflict, 'it was felt by the meeting that judgment should be suspended for a year'."

"On what grounds", asked the Engineer, "did Mr. Kennedy object to the resolution passed in New York?"

"His objections are exactly the same, in substance, as those advanced by Mr. Paul Raatz and by many other former members of the Society in Germany".

"That is interesting", the Engineer commented. "It means that the English Branch of our Society, instead of leading the opinion of Great Britain, instead of speaking for the crucified soul of the British people, is reflecting the conflict and confusion which the lower psychic nature of Great Britain has made manifest, in terms of Pro-Germanism and Bolshevism, ever since the Armistice. I am sorry. And I suppose that, as usual, it is done in the name of Universal Brotherhood!"

"Yes", answered the Ancient. "It is done in the name of Universal Brotherhood. Let in everyone; expel no one,—we are told. It does not seem to matter if women and children are tortured and outraged. The men who commit such crimes; the men who condone such crimes; the men who refuse to condemn such crimes, with the men who, in the name of God and of Theosophy, vehemently denounce such crimes,—all alike are fitting material for that nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood which the Society is trying to form."

"Are they crazy?" asked the Student.

"It depends upon what you mean by 'crazy' ", the Ancient replied. "That they understand nothing of brotherhood and nothing of Theosophy, is obvious. But there is a vast difference between being blind and being crazy,—unless the blindness be in any way wanton, or due to some deep-seated personal bias".

"But why did those who framed the resolution, agree to suspend judgment for a year?"

"I believe they thought it would be untheosophical to fight it out on the floor of the Convention. They went so far, for the sake of peace, as to submit to the election of Mr. Kennedy as General Secretary,—not seeming to realize that, under a strict interpretation of the resolution passed by the Convention of the Society as a whole, it might well be considered that Mr. Kennedy had already expelled himself from membership. The motive in sacrificing so much for the sake of peace, un-

Digitized by Google

doubtedly was sincerely unselfish; but I must say that it seems to me to have been a mistake".

"It reflected the best of England's present attitude", said the Philosopher. "It was not sure of itself. England's mental confusion; her lack of strong, clear-seeing leadership, based on bed-rock principle, is deplorable. She is like a ship without a helmsman. See the way she has allowed herself to play Germany's game! See the way she is meeting Bolshevism, not only in Russia, but within her own household! There are many well-meaning and really good people in England, who suffer deeply from this lack of leadership, and who see exactly where things are drifting, but who lack the experience, perhaps, which would enable them to seize the rudder and to steer the foundering ship into port".

"Not a single point was brought up at their meeting in England", said the Ancient, "which had not been thrashed out at the Convention in New York. If the report in the July issue of the QUARTERLY had not only been read, but had been studied; if arguments had been analyzed, and principles had been sought until found,—I do not believe that the final decision of the English members would have been to suspend judgment. Mr. Kennedy and his friends are still arguing that the function of the Society, and even of the QUARTERLY, is limited to the enunciation of generalities. Thus, from their standpoint, so far as it is understandable, it is lawful to say, 'Brotherhood is our ideal'; but it is unlawful, theosophically, to say, 'Brotherhood does not of necessity mean Communism.' It is unlawful to say this, we are asked to believe, for the reason that there are some people who think that community of goods (not to speak of community of wives) is of the essence of Brotherhood. In other words, what 'some people' think, it is untheosophical to combat".

"Shades of H. P. B.!" interjected the Student.

"Hush!" the Ancient retorted. "Leave H. P. B. out of it. There might be an explosion.

"These same people", he continued, "are the victims also of a strange delusion about 'politics'. They imagine that the QUARTERLY has become 'political', and that our constant effort to apply theosophical principles practically, not only to the problems of the individual, but to the problems of nations, and to the interpretation of history, is intensely untheosophical. In this case also, they do not object to generalities; they can endure such statements as, 'Honesty is beautiful': but if you add, 'Crime is hideous', you are 'in danger of the judgment', while if you dare to say that a judge on the bench may be a good theosophist while sentencing a criminal to a term in prison,—you are in danger of hell fire!"

"Is it that", asked the Historian, "or can it be that the QUARTERLY has ridden roughshod over precious but hidden idols, such as Bolshevism? Bolshevism, as you are aware, has quite a following in England. It appeals to the discontented, and to those whose ambitions have been thwarted. It appeals also to those who resent the 'struggle for life'. It is a nostrum, and, like certain widely advertised patent medicines,

Digitized by Google

though it kill, it makes big promises, and will absolutely guarantee 'a change'."

"Suppose", said the Philosopher, "that we try to see the matter from the point of view of Mr. Kennedy and his friends. After all, the only power for evil which any wrong attitude or action possesses, is the element of truth and right which it has deflected and distorted. If, then, we can find the element of right in their attitude, and separate this from the wrong,—we shall be that much nearer the truth, and, therefore, that much further away from the seat of the trouble.

"It is clear, in the first place, that they are basing their contention upon the principle of freedom in The Theosophical Society. We have asserted many times that any member is free to hold any opinions he pleases in matters of belief, provided he extend equal tolerance to the beliefs of others. This is a vital principle, but it is not contravened (as they claim) by any resolution passed at the Convention.

"The Convention declared that, because many people were urging pacifism and neutrality in the name of Brotherhood, and because it is the first object of The Theosophical Society to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, the Society was compelled to answer that war is not of necessity a violation of brotherhood. Secondly, it was declared that when an individual sees clearly that moral principles are at stake, neutrality for him must be impossible.

"To deny either statement leads immediately to contradiction and absurdity. H. P. B. stated constantly that a professional soldier may be a good theosophist. But, again, there is no need to drag H. P. B. into it! There is such a thing as common sense, and although there are some fanatics who deny that the use of force is justifiable, even to protect a woman or child from outrage, I, in my turn, deny them the right to attach to such insanity the name of Theosophy or the name of Brotherhood.

"Suppose, for instance, that it were to become noised abroad that Theosophy stands for free love, or for some similar horror. Suppose that a group of people, daring to call themselves theosophists, were publicly to proclaim such beliefs. Can it be pretended that our Society would not have the right to defend its good name by repudiation and protest? It would not only have the right, but, in easily imaginable circumstances, protest would be its immediate duty.

"The second claim of these few English members, as I understand it, is that we should welcome all who seek truth and theosophic ideals. We should,—granting the sincerity of applicants. We exclude no one because of past errors. But present actions are different. When it is obvious that a member is working for purposes which are the opposite of those of the Society, it follows that that member and the Society must part company. Usually this is brought about by the resignation of the member. But no matter how brought about, the principle is clear that while we hold the door as widely open as possible for everyone who

Digitized by Google

desires the opportunity to accompany us on our journey, the Society must of necessity retain the right to drop those who pull against its course and who oppose its aims".

"It should not be forgotten", interjected the Scientist, "that a nucleus is formed by a process of elimination as well as by accretion. These English members seem to have paid no attention to the word 'nucleus', or to its significance, but seem, instead, to have been carried away by the idea of a meaningless, purposeless, characterless conglomerate of human beings, the sole function of which is to carry a banner labelled Brotherhood. You would not wish me to contribute a dissertation on the subject of nuclei, but it would be well at least to remember that a structural difference between the nucleus and the rest of the cell-protoplasm is indicated by its greater resistance to powerful reagents, and that a nucleus is composed of (1) a nuclear membrane, (2) nuclear network, and (3) nucleoplasm, and containing nucleoli, which are the nucleus of a nucleus. That a true nucleus controls the character and function of the cell, is vital, as I see it, to our entire discussion. The Theosophical Society owes it to its Founders and to mankind, to prevent the use of its forces for purposes which are antagonistic to its own".

"That even one of the English members should have failed England is profoundly to be regretted", said the Engineer. "England did so splendidly during the war, that her moral collapse, due to reaction, is more tragic than all the deaths of her bravest. She needs help sorely, and she deserves it. Apart from the hosts of her dead, who have won age-long blessings for her, she ought to have found in the British branch of The Theosophical Society, her guiding 'nucleus' and strongest spiritual impulse. More than that, she ought to have found intellectual clarity and sure grasp of principle".

"There is, I think, yet another way of approaching this subject", the Scholar suggested finally; "and while our discussion, so far, should remove the haze which in many minds still surrounds it, we must remember that, while it seemed to have been thrashed out at the general Convention in New York, the result, in England, proved that enough had not been said.

"I can imagine that a superficial student of Theosophy might argue that because 'all souls are identical with the Oversoul', therefore Brotherhood is a fact in nature. Consequently, the function of The Theosophical Society is simply to recognize that fact. Consequently, all who recognize Brotherhood as a fact, or who say they do, are worthy of membership in the Society.

"The fallacies packed into such a chain of reasoning are innumerable. First, not all men have souls. Second, while a Brotherhood of souls already exists in the spiritual world, it does not follow, unfortunately, that it already exists in this world. We know, on the contrary, that the very opposite of Brotherhood exists, for there are many who fight consciously against the purposes of the soul, and there are

Digitized by Google

many more who fight against those purposes unconsciously. Third, instead of the function of The Theosophical Society being simply to recognize an existing order, its function is to educate its members into a realization, not only in understanding but in action, of a spiritual truth, and thus to introduce into this world, or to make manifest in this world, an ideal as a reality. Fourth, to be a worthy member of the Society involves much more than the intellectual and theoretical acceptance of a belief in Brotherhood.

"Suppose, for instance, that a man joins the Society, stating that he believes in the principle of Brotherhood. Suppose that he then commits a murder, or several murders, and that he advocates murder,—perhaps on the ground that people are in his way, and that, as they are happier in heaven, his understanding of brotherhood obliges him to send them there. Question: Would such a man be a worthy member of the Society, or would it be the duty of the Society to expel him?

"Suppose that another man, who says he is devoted to the cause of Brotherhood, does not actually commit murder, but admires the man who does; avowedly approves the first man's reasons for 'sending people to heaven', and declares that any condemnation of murder is unbrotherly and untheosophical. Is he worthy of membership in the Society, or ought he to be expelled?

"Suppose, now, that a man is in no sense a murderer, but is either incapable of seeing a moral principle, so that murder leaves him indifferent, or has wilfully closed his eyes because of personal or racial prejudice, refusing to see murder as murder, and condoning crime by phrases such as, 'Why make such a fuss?' 'Don't be disagreeable', 'Don't be vindictive', 'We must be brotherly'. Speaking for myself, I have more respect for the man who murders, than for the man who thus condones crime, or the condoners of crime, under a cloak of charity and brotherhood. When, in addition, the cloak of Theosophy is used, I feel that not only the Society itself is dishonored, but that every member is compromised, and is entitled, therefore, to such protection and vindication as the Executive Committee is in a position to afford. The offender has a perfect right, of course, to declare that his 'charity' is the only genuine expression of Theosophy. In nearly every case, that is exactly what he does declare. But if his so-called charity is discreditable to the Society, discreditable to its Founders, and discreditable to its members; if his charity is a caricature of Theosophy and brings its ideals into contempt,—then, in my opinion, it is grossly unfair to all concerned that they,—and, above all, Theosophy itself,—should be obliged to suffer for his self-gratification. To pretend that freedom of speech requires it, is to confuse freedom with license,—and license, actually, is just what such people mean when they talk about freedom. They forget that freedom is impossible without law and order, and without a large element, also, of that sort of decency which leads a man to retire from an association (in this case, The Theosophical Society as last assembled in

Digitized by Google

Convention) with which he finds himself completely out of harmony."

"Might we not add", asked the Student, " 'when it is intimated that his presence has become offensive'?"

"One more question," the Student added: "What did this meeting of English members at Newcastle represent?"

"It was a meeting, or convention," said the Ancient, "of the British national branch of The Theosophical Society. It is a *branch* of the parent Society. If there were a branch in Chicago with as many members as there are in England, both the Chicago branch and the British national branch would be entitled to the same number of delegates, and of votes, at the annual Convention of The Theosophical Society, such as was held in New York last April. All branches are represented, either in person or by proxy, at such Conventions, and it is only then, and in that way, that the Society can express itself. At the last Convention, the Society did express itself, unanimously and emphatically. All that has happened is that a few English members—very few, I believe—declare themselves, and are declared, to be radically alien to the Society as a whole." T.

As a strong antiseptic prevents the growth of the germs of disease, so suffering checks the taint of base and selfish feelings, which so easily insinuate themselves into our hearts, and impair the purity of our motives and intentions. Suffering chastens the soul and its aspirations, the mind and its views, the heart and its affections. Whatever tends to free us from selfish motives must help to increase the merit of our thoughts, words, and actions. Suffering increases merit by insuring not only greater purity, but also greater earnestness of motive. It has a bracing influence upon the will, and gives tone and vigour to its exercise. Difficulties and sufferings bring out manliness, and strength of will, and nobility of soul. They are earnestness of purpose. They are an unmistakable test of solid virtue. There is beauty and merit in each least aspiration of virtue breathed on the playful wing of joy, but there is greater and more solid merit in the depth and vigour of determination evinced in the practice of virtue under difficulties, temptations and trials. There is no trial, temptation, or suffering which cannot be turned into a blessing by the will of a conscious sufferer.—GOD AND HUMAN SUFFERING.

Digitized by Google

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

July 14th, 1912.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

I also take for granted that you devote at least half an hour daily to meditation and to self-examination. This is absolutely essential, for it is during this period that we really grow, that we get the sustenance that is necessary for growth. While it is hard to keep this rule fully and conscientiously, you will learn to look forward to this time as the best part of each day. There is no limit to our organization. Even the oldest members, the member who has made the most progress, and many have made very great progress indeed, tell us that the way opens up beyond in an unlimited vista of further heights to be scaled, with those standing by who have scaled these further heights, and who stand ready to do everything they can to help.

So make your own ideal high. "Hitch your wagon to a star." We cannot hope to reach our goal at once, but at least let us have a great goal and not a little one. There is no limit to the progress which you can make in just the circumstances that you are in. You may feel that it is not so, and that if you had more leisure, or did not have to work so hard, or could read and study more, or if circumstances were different in some way or other, you could go further and faster; but it is not so. It is just the circumstances which we are in that are the very best possible for us, and which will produce the conditions we need to surmount and to conquer, so bringing out the new qualities which we need.

Of course it is hard, but we are trying to do a great thing, nothing less than to anticipate by scores of thousands of years the general evolution of the rest of humanity. We must force ourselves ahead, because the soul calls us, the Masters call, and are waiting for us to grow, so that we can help them help others. It is a great task which we have ahead of us, and it has its great rewards.

I shall be glad to hear from you frequently, and to try to answer any questions which you may want to ask.

Fraternally,
C. A. GRISCOM.

October 15th, 1912.

DEAR ———

Your letter came while I was in Europe; I returned a week ago, and am taking the first opportunity to thank you for your letter and for the straightforward way in which you have written. That is most necessary if this correspondence is to be really helpful to you—as I earnestly desire.

Digitized by Google

Answering first your question about meditation, for that is the most important subject for us all to understand. Yes, I think it is very desirable to select some one hour for meditation, and to keep the time zealously for it, allowing nothing but an urgent duty to interfere with the half hour or more given to it. There are several reasons for this counsel; for one, we thus take advantage of the law of habit, or to put it in a different way, the law of periodicity. In this connection, one of our members recently cited experiments in which large masses of metal were moved by finger pressure constantly and rhythmically applied. Think this out and you will see how it applies.

Most of us have found that it is more important to choose an hour that can be kept every day, than to consider whether it shall be early or late. In many ways the early morning hours are the most favourable for people who are living outwardly in the whirl of things, for in the early morning the cares and distractions of the day are less in our thoughts, our minds are not so distinctly dominant. . . Our private meditations should spring out of our lives, should in fact *be* our lives. Too many times we are inclined to think of meditation as a formal exercise to be gone through with because we are told to do it, just as listless children may go through an exercise in calisthenics and get no good from it. We are told that we get our real knowledge through meditation; so evidently one fruitful subject for meditation will be the thing or things that we truly want to know.

There are many steps to be taken before we reach meditation as the Great Ones know it, and they have to be passed one by one. With our Western habits of thought, it is often easier to learn to pray than to learn to meditate; both lead in the end to the same goal. Why not try the experiment of giving the first part of every meditation period to prayer? Pray to the Master, imagine that he is near you (for it is only in your imagination that he is far away from you!), tell him very simply about your desire to draw close to him, ask his guidance in any problems that you have to meet, resign your will absolutely to him, longing only to find out his way that you may do it. Then try to centre your heart on him, compel your mind to keep still, and instead of talking to him, "meditate" on him. This is only one of many ways; but try it and let me know whether you find any help in it. . .

As you study, the light will come; here a little, there a little. Unless you have a considerable amount of time to give to study, I think you would do better to reserve the reading of the *Secret Doctrine* until later. It contains an enormous mass of very valuable material, which is to be had by mining, as one digs information out of an encyclopædia; but you do not appear to need that kind of reading at present.

Now about "practical work"; that is a most sacred obligation, and chances to meet it will come, as you look for them. Many of our members are actively engaged in church work, not *talking* Theosophy

Digitized by Google

as such, but trying to apply the "theosophic method" to their work, and doing it all for the Master.

* * * * * * *

Until we become masters of our minds, they serve us many a bad turn. If thoughts come to you that you do not wish to entertain, give your mind the antidote as quickly and as firmly as possible. Force it every time this happens to dwell on something that is clean and true, picture to yourself vividly some noble act,—and then go and *do something* for somebody else that you would not otherwise have done.

I shall be glad to hear from you again when you feel like writing, and do not hesitate to ask over again any questions to which I have not given answers as explicit as you desired.

With all good wishes for you, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

December 1st, 1912.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

Answering your question first, I should say that without doubt the experience you describe is psychic and not spiritual. It is practically an invariable rule that we *feel* spiritual things long before we can apprehend them through any other sense, such as sight or hearing; and by "long before" I mean that we are likely to have several years when our only contact with the real inner world will be through feeling. If a person has natural psychic gifts they are a barrier and not a help, unless they are dealt with very sternly. They must be put aside in every possible way, never permitted to function, and kept ruthlessly in the background, until we have firmly established ourselves in the inner world—and then they are no longer necessary, and need not be used for our further progress, as we shall have then other and better faculties that more than take their place.

You inquire why we should ask questions of older students when we are told to go to the Master for inward light and guidance. The two directions are not contradictory, although they may at first seem so. We must do both things faithfully; for until we are able to go directly to the Master himself, he will send his reply to our request for help through other channels. The student, who is so used, may perhaps be unaware that the Master is using him as a means of giving you the truth for which you have asked the Master; that does not matter. But the Master must use some such means until you are capable of direct communion.

It is not that, if he wished, he could not reach you in any one of a hundred ways, including that of appearing before you in his physical body, and talking to you in the ordinary, commonplace way. It is that

Digitized by Google

any experience of the kind, even the slightest, would result in a violent reaction which can be directly measured by the height from which the force comes. We react from any spiritual truth simply from the power that is in it. This is the case whether we read the truth in a devotional book, have it communicated to us in a letter, or in a talk, or in any other way; and the truer it is, or seems to us to be, the greater will be the reaction of our lower natures from it. This reaction is usually so indirect that it is very difficult for us to trace it. For instance, we may go to a meeting, have a very agreeable and stimulating time, and feel that it has done us a great deal of good. Two days later we may lose our temper and be very disagreeable to a friend. It is hard to realize that the two things are related, but they are. One is directly caused by the other. The reaction from spiritual experience may break out in any kind of physical disturbance, or on the mental, moral or emotional planes. One of the things that we have to do in the course of our training is to recognize our reactions, and to learn to look for, and so to control them, before they dominate us.

No, I do not think you are "imagining" the help to which you refer. You probably are not yet in a position to trace it back with assurance to its source, and that really is not of much importance to you just now; but the fact is, that we are all of us given, every day, help and encouragement of which we are entirely unconscious, and, worse still, opportunities to which we pay not the slightest heed. Look constantly for such guidance, and do not distrust it when you get it!

You ask what "practical work" means—whether you should look for a wider field. I have not time now to answer that fully, but here is a clue to the answer, which you can work out for yourself: remember that your surroundings, your work, your duties, are not accidental, that they are nicely adjusted to teach you lessons that you need to learn; remember, too, that it matters little *what* we do, so long as we do it for the Master, as a means of serving him and making his will our own, and consequently do the thing, whatever it may be, as well as we are capable of doing it.

* * * * * * *

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

January 26th, 1913.

DEAR ———

I was much interested in your letter of January 7th, which helps me in my efforts to help you. There is the greatest difference in the kind of letters which I receive. No one can pour information down another's throat. We must ask in order to

Digitized by Google

receive. We must always make a demand upon the spiritual law before it will come to our aid. And I am happy in the knowledge that all my deficiencies will be supplemented by those much wiser than I am; that what you need in the way of help and instruction, which I cannot furnish, you will get in other ways. Therefore do not depend upon me, but go into your own heart for the faith and inspiration and knowledge which you seek. It is there that we get our real help and guidance, and that is as it should be.

We all of us have periods of dryness; we all have times of depression; we all suffer now and again from inability to feel the reality of the spiritual world. If you will read the lives of the saints, you will see that it is an almost invariable complaint. You will also see many suggestions as to how to act at such times. Generally speaking the thing to do is to go right on with our regular spiritual exercises, whatever they may be, pray regularly, try to meditate our usual time, read our devotional books,—in a word, act just as if we felt as we should like to feel. The power we generate doing these things when we do not want to do them, and when it is an effort to do them, gradually wears away the barrier which has temporarily come between us and the sun. Then, one day, the light breaks through and we are all right again until the next attack comes on. We often grow more during these periods of depression and dryness, than during the periods of spiritual fervour and light and life, because we are trying harder, we are actually making more effort, and it is effort that counts, not what seems to us to be the results. Above all, we must take these periods with serenity, and must try to realize that they are not ourselves but separate from us,—something that comes from our past, or from outside, from the evil of the world, from any lower source, and gradually learn to deal with them impersonally. If you have a boil, you recognize it, suffer from it, treat it, are glad to get rid of it, but it never occurs to you to identify yourself with it. Treat your periods of depression this same way. Study them. You will find that they come in cycles, perhaps regular cycles, for we are affected by many cyclic laws which we do not understand at all.

With reference to your question about meditation. Of course, as you suggest, we must go to our meditation as a duty to perform whether we like it or not. It is only by keeping at it in spite of lack of results, of distaste, of fatigue, of inertia, of any hindrance of any kind, that we can hope finally to learn how to do it properly. My idea went a step beyond that. I wanted to suggest that in actual fact the time of meditation is the time we should look forward to in all the day as that time when we are happiest and most peaceful and most joyful. If we really understood, it would be looked forward to eagerly.

* * * * * * *

With kindest regards, I am

Fraternally,

C. A. Griscom.

Digitized by Google

April 12th, 1913.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

Of course we all do want a willing and obedient heart, but that only comes through love. Now love comes through obedience; hence you see the necessity of forcing ourselves to do things which we know we ought to do, even when we are depressed and do not feel at all like doing them. It is the force we rouse in order to do them, that gradually wears away the obstructions to a more perfect performance. So long as we feel resentment of any kind, it is proof positive that we need just that sort of experience; resentment being the sign that, in that particular, our self-will is very much awake. Resentment means that we want to do things our way, and not the Master's way. We resent the interference with our own way. Of course this does not always appear on the surface, but it always exists underneath.

* * * * * * *

No one can find the Kingdom of Heaven unaided. They must be helped by those above them, by those who are their fellow-students, and, finally, by those below them,—at least, to the extent that they pass on the teaching which has been given them. It is not sufficient to go on plodding year after year. We need personal direction. And the only way to get this personal help is to ask for it; not generally, but specifically, in detail.

* * * * * * *

If I do not reply to some question of yours, it may be because I think the real answer is contained in something else I write. If you do not feel so, write again.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

January 21st, 1914.

DEAR ———

Thank you for your letter of the 28th.

But you must *not* be reluctant to write me and, if necessary, "pour out your troubles". It is a great privilege that you should be willing to do so, and, if you feel that it will be of help, please do not hesitate.

Remember that we cannot hope to get into heaven by ourselves. As a matter of fact, at certain points on the road, we need three kinds of help: we need the help of those above us; we need the help of our comrades; and we need the help of those we have helped—of those below us. It is well to struggle courageously, indomitably, perseveringly; but it is also well to realize that we cannot win without the assistance

Digitized by Google

of others. We need help,—all of us: it is a law of brotherhood that we cannot do without it.

I do not think it does any good to change our circumstances; certainly not by doing violence to natural conditions. Life will surely do it for us when our soul's good needs a different set. What we must strive to do is to live perfectly in any circumstances. Brother Lawrence was a cook for thirty-five years, and attained such a degree of holiness in that environment, that bishops and cardinals came from all over France to consult with him about their problems and their souls.

The distractions, the lack of privacy, the interruptions of your life, provide you with the opportunity you need to cultivate serenity, humility, resignation, and the ability to offer everything you do on the altar of the Higher Self—the Master. That is the true concentration, true continuous meditation.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

October 1st, 1914.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * * *

The emphasis, you will see, is laid upon *life,* upon how to live. If we live properly, it does not matter what we know. Knowledge will come.

Proper living is a question of detail. The best definition of a saint I know is:—"A saint is not one who practises heroic virtues; but one who practises common virtues to an heroic degree".

At the last analysis, what we are all trying to do is to become saints, i.e. to practise ordinary, commonplace virtues to an heroic degree. That means infinite attention to the details of life: how we sit, how we eat, what we eat, how we sleep and how much and when; how we talk and what we say; how we walk and think and act, from morning until night. A very good plan is to picture to ourselves how we would behave if we were in the presence of a Master, and then act accordingly,—in every detail of life.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

India and the West, by C. R. Lanman, Journal of the American Oriental Society, October, 1920.

This is the Presidential Address delivered by Professor Lanman, of Harvard University, before the American Oriental Society, at Ithaca, on April 6, 1920. The full title is: "India and the West with a Plea for Team-Work among Scholars"; and Professor Lanman defines team-work with both humour and feeling as "'work done by the players of a team collectively, for example, by the players of a football eleven.' These must do each his best for the success of his team as a whole. To this end, they must be free from the slightest feeling of personal jealousy, and must not allow the hope of personal advantage to influence any thought or act." The Address is, therefore, a plea for the study of Indian and other Oriental religions and literatures in this generous and gentle spirit.

Developing his subject, Professor Lanman reminds us that India has for many centuries been more or less in touch with the West, as also with the Far East. After Alexander's expedition, with the wealth of writings in Greek which flowed from it, there were many travellers. Professor Lanman has something to say also of the Chinese pilgrims who, inspired by the Buddhist missionaries from India, went thither to learn the Indian tongues in order that they might study the Good Law at its source. Such was Fa-hien, of whom it was said: "Since the Great Doctrine flowed on to the East, there has been no one to be compared with Fa-hien in his forgetfulness of self and search for the Law. . . ."

Western knowledge of Sanskrit began with studious and able members of the East India Company's service in Bengal, such as H. T. Colebrooke and Sir William Jones, instrumental in founding the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. From Colebrooke, Professor Lanman quotes this amusing comment on Charles Wilkins:

"I have never yet seen any book which can be depended on for information concerning the real opinions of the Hindus except Wilkins' 'Bhagvat Geeta.' That gentleman was Sanskrit-mad and has more materials and more general knowledge respecting the Hindus than any other foreigner ever acquired since the days of Pythagoras."

And we are reminded that Wilkins, such was his zeal for Eastern learning, himself cut the punches for the first Indian type.

Coming to the heart of his subject, Professor Lanman says:

"An Occidental who would faithfully interpret India to the West must also know the life of India from actual observation and experience, and must be able to look at it from the Eastern angle of vision. . . . And, on the other hand, since the Hindus themselves are already actively engaged in interpreting the East to the West, it is needful also that they visit us, not merely to learn our way of doing things, but also to look at life as we look at it, and thus find out what things—such, let us say, as repose of spirit or the simple life—the West most needs to learn from the East."

With the fullest sympathy for everything that Professor Lanman says, a student of Theosophy would be inclined to add this: While it is altogether to be desired that the scholars of the West should work cordially with the scholars of the East, they must, if they really desire to sound the depths of Eastern scriptures,

Digitized by Google

do something more. They must do all in their power to gain the insight possessed, and generously shared, by the living Masters of the East, who are scholars and something more, and who really know what the Western scholars seek to know.

That Professor Lanman has no prejudice against the word "Theosophy," is shown by this sentence: "At least four small volumes should be devoted to specimens from the Rig Veda, the Atharva Veda, the Brahmanas and the Upanishads. These last might well be entitled 'Theosophy of the Hindus: their doctrine of the all-pervading God.'"

The reviewer is tempted to supplement this by a quotation from a contribution by Professor Lanman to the Journal of the American Oriental Society for June, 1920, on "Phrase-words and Phrase-derivatives." To illustrate the way phrase-words have come into being in Sanskrit and Pali, Professor Lanman quotes this modern instance of the creation of a phrase-word admirable in its concise expressiveness: A very small boy was asked: "Is that puppy yours or your little brother's?"

Earnestly he replied: "It's both-of-us's!" C. J.

What is the Kingdom of Heaven? (Scribner's, 1920), by A. Clutton Brock, English historical writer and man of letters: a stimulating and provocative criticism of Christ's teaching as to the Kingdom of Heaven, ably presented from the point of view of one who has studied the New Testament sympathetically and intelligently. The style is direct, bold, sincere to the point of being downright, and yet in nowise harsh or repellent.

Mr. Brock purposely assumes the intellectual position of a modern, pagan, and cultivated mind, hostile to narrow orthodoxy; but he has himself been irresistibly attracted, and won, by the eternal verities of Christ's revelation. His method is winning; his enthusiasm is catching; the reader is impelled to agree with his penetrating logic.

The inconsistency and "failure of belief" in the world of "orthodoxy" lead to a direct appeal to the source of Christianity, to what the writer maintains is its central teaching,—that of the Kingdom of Heaven. The significance of this teaching, if men would only accept it, live it, is clearly seen and forcibly presented. "To the orthodox," the conduct described in the Sermon on the Mount is "surprising", but it "is what God commands; to Christ it is the conduct natural to man when he knows the Kingdom of Heaven, as natural as eating and drinking are to men who see food and are hungry" (p. 33). "The fatal error of the orthodox" is that "they believe on or in the Lord Jesus Christ, but they do not believe Him; for they have not even tried to understand what He said. It was the Kingdom of Heaven that He wished men to believe in, to see, to make . . . Belief in Christ is a burden which the world is throwing off, because it has never believed Him" (p. 39).

Mr. Brock's application of the fundamental principles of the Kingdom—"The Logic of the Doctrine",—both to politics and to the individual, shows unusual penetration. "The proper function of the Church . . . is to see the Kingdom of Heaven to be a fellowship of those who are seeking the Kingdom of Heaven in the manner laid down by Christ" (p. 76). "*Vox populi* is not *vox Dei.*" "It is not the voice of the people unless it is also the voice of God," which "is the true meaning of the words" (pp. 93-100). "The problem of capital is not, finally, the problem of its ownership, but the problem of its use" (p. 104). "Men cannot live without either the real Kingdom or a false one. Man is of such a nature that he must be in some relation to the Kingdom, a relation of acceptance or refusal. . . . Insensitiveness is not, as some suppose, the result of a crude, strong, physical organization; it is a weakness, a refusal of the mind that grows with the mind's refusal. It is, as it were, a morbid thickening of the mind's outer skin, the result of which is, not that the mind is protected from harm, but that it is cut off from that relation with the Kingdom of Heaven which is health, so that it breeds within itself its own unconscious illusions" (p. 122). A. G.

Digitized by Google

QUESTION No. 248.—*How can I tell whether I am making progress along the Path? Please give, if possible, some very simple tests. I am so often discouraged. The years are slipping by, and I have the very same faults that I had when I started.*

ANSWER.—Why be discouraged? Are you sure your faults are the same? Can you not see them more clearly than when you started? It is far better to have a "thorn in the flesh" like St. Paul, and to keep constantly at work on it, than to get the feeling of satisfaction that says, "Now I have done something; I have eradicated that fault." In that very moment another fault has come up. The only thing is to keep at the job doggedly and grimly, offering up the results as a sacrifice. Ever keep trying; make an offering of any success and even of failure, remembering that the only failure is to cease to try. I should say, do not trouble about tests. Life brings us all such numberless opportunities and tests. If we stop to think whether we have any of us succeeded here or succeeded there, we have wasted time. Let us try to become simple again. Like a little child let us bring as an offering the best we have, and leave the results to Him we serve.

A. K.

ANSWER.—Would not the surest test be: Have I more, or less, of the *will* to do, the determination to master myself, my desires, my emotions; and am I better able now to get that *will* on top quickly, in a crisis? Beyond that, why apply a measuring rod to our achievements—we are no judge of them. The fault that now seems the same as some years back, may be the same fault several stages higher up; or circumstances may now be such as to provoke it much more severely; or the failure to conquer that fault may be the best possible means toward teaching us humility, patience, or understanding of another's difficulty. As Saint Teresa says, "Leave that to the Master of the house: He is wise and powerful and knows what is best for you and for Himself."

P. T. O.

ANSWER.—Suppose you are making no progress; what then? Are you going to stop trying? Suppose you are, quite unknown to yourself, making great progress; what then? In either event, are you going to slacken your effort? Or perhaps, if you could know that your progress was disappointingly slow, you think you could do better. If you could, why not do it, at once? Is it possible for us to make too complete, too devoted an effort to follow and to serve the Masters who spare themselves in nothing, to aid us?

If tests are longed for, if there must be a measure, here is one: Are you better able, than in the beginning, to forget self, to lose self in devotion to the work, to the cause of Masters? Then there has been progress. Test it by your willingness to let go all this testing. Centre your interest in the road ahead, not in the number of yards traversed. It is a very long road. Since we know we want to travel it to the very end, why use the yardstick?

E.

QUESTION No. 249.—*What would you advise a new member-at-large to undertake, as distinctive work for the Movement? So far as I know there is nobody in*

Digitized by Google

my environment who has any interest in Theosophy. My friends are patiently or impatiently bored when I talk about it. What can I do that will really help?

ANSWER.—First, translate the ideas and principles which you appreciate in Theosophy into terms familiar to all in your environment. To do this, you will have to think all these things out for yourself and they will become real for you. Then you will shape your life and acts accordingly. As those in your environment insensibly appreciate this you will find that they will either lean towards the truth you represent or away from it, according to their own natures: at least they will no longer be bored. You will find you have quite enough to do for some time, and meanwhile you will find that your environment has altered. Do not talk about Theosophy, but live it. A. K.

ANSWER.—It has been said that every member of The Theosophical Society is, if he so choose, an ambassador from the Lodge of Masters to his community. To represent them properly, he evidently needs to learn all that reading and meditation will give him—about their ways of dealing with mankind; what they value; how they work; how they are best served. One point would be clear from the start—they have always encouraged men to offer them deeds rather than words. They have given an example of their scale of values by ceaselessly working for mankind while seldom breaking in upon it with advice or direction of any sort. E.

QUESTION No. 250.—*We are living to-day in the midst of such threatened and actual social upheavals that it is puzzling to know how principles should be applied. When everything slides out of place, as during a storm at sea, what is one to do? The carpenter, whom I call in to do some simple repairs, treats me as if I were shortly to be his tenant, if allowed a house at all. How am I to treat him honestly, and yet get my work done?*

ANSWER.—Do what you do in the storm at sea. Then you tie everything in place or wedge it there so that it does not shift. You cannot take the ship or yourself out of the storm. You cannot take your principles out of the social upheaval. So get firm hold of them, and the underlying verities in nature; treat and talk to your carpenter or your employee, of whatever grade, from that point of view. It is "up to you" to cause him to feel that you are able to give him direction because you are what you are, and not because of any accidental position of birth or any other enviable possessions. Principle and character are the means by which we can weather these social upheaval storms, and there is nothing else firm enough to tie to. The "social-upheavalists" are endeavouring to obtain possessions; the first things they strive for are money and position and a "good time", which they think to secure by means of self-assertion. Well, they strive after the moon that way. Your part is surely to give them of your best:—yourself, and what you have made of yourself through the principles by which you have chosen to shape your life. Your carpenter will yield to the force of your character, and respect you for it. So will you be your "brother's keeper" and give of your best in your own environment. A. K.

QUESTION No. 251.—*Is there any way to hold oneself up to the level of consciousness attained in prayer and meditation, and to avoid dropping back to one's ordinary level?*

ANSWER.—Surely, there must be: but as surely that way involves constant practice, until "practice makes perfect". To avoid dropping back means the attainment of "continuous meditation," or the stage of contemplation perfected. But this involves little short of perfection from our ordinary human point of view. We, who are in the midst of ordinary life, have the opportunity of endeavouring to practise holding ourselves up to the level with all sorts of distractions around us

Digitized by Google

to divert our attention. We can follow Krishna's injunction, "Think of Me and fight"; can offer up all our acts and thoughts on the altar of the heart, making of each an offering consciously made to the Master. Our ordinary life thus constitutes a splendid opportunity of practising "recollection", not merely as a definite performance at a specified hour, but in each act and thought of the day. A life so lived becomes a sum total of consecration, and it is by such means that we shall avoid dropping back. A. K.

QUESTION No. 252.—*How do you explain Joan of Arc's "Voices"? Were they psychic delusions of some sort, or real guidance?*

ANSWER.—I explain them in the way she explained them. I think she is the best judge. She spoke of them as the voices of her brothers in Paradise. I think that is what they were. She had given her whole life to a purpose. She was used as the instrument of divine forces for the working of a miracle. That miracle stands forth in history undisputed. There was nothing in a girl, a peasant girl, to work that miracle, unless there was a divine power back of her. Quite simply, she said her brothers in Paradise told her what to do. She did not want to do it. She pleaded to be left alone. Finally, she went; giving her life in obedience. That is one of the tests. M.

ANSWER.—At all times, in all ages, there have been those who have talked with their brothers in Paradise. They did not have to die in order to do it. They were perfectly wide-awake. They knew what they were doing. Remember again, the pure in heart shall see God. The pure in heart, with all that that implies: clearly that must mean singleness of soul; singleness of purpose; absolute un-self-consciousness; the desire to do what the Masters wish, what the Law wishes, what God wishes,—to do it without reference to self. They were willing to pay any price. The pure in heart have always seen Him, and always will. H.

QUESTION No. 253.—*At a recent Theosophical Society Branch meeting we were advised, in thinking of the great war, not to confine ourselves to its incidents or outer causes, but to seek the purpose back of it. The speaker said that modern science entirely neglected, and even sought to banish purpose from the universe, but that real students of Theosophy sought the purpose in all things. Does this mean that there is a purpose in every trivial happening of daily life and that we ought to seek to find it?*

ANSWER.—We are all of us familiar with people who are perpetually bubbling over with talk simply for the love of talking. What they say is a matter of no importance to themselves or any one else; they go through life incessantly creating noise for the sake of hearing the sound of their own voices and giving expression to the vapidity that arises within them. Are we to imagine that God—or the Lodge or the Power back of evolution, or whatever term you choose to use for the great creative Power of the universe—is equally vapid, and creates worlds and events the way children break dolls' heads, just to hear the noise they make?

"The universe exists for the purposes of the soul." It was created by the Soul for the soul, and nothing arises or can ever arise that should not be used for the growth of the soul. This applies as well to the events that we, in our ignorance of true proportion, are pleased to call trivial, as to those that we call great. One way to learn to see the purpose of daily events, is to set ourselves to find how each one may be used to develop character, to help in the acquisition of some power that our souls need,—patience, sympathy for others in place of irritation, humility instead of vanity, endurance and courage instead of fear and self-pity, or whatever the lesson may be. Always beneath the outer covering lies Life's gift to us, if we will but take it. M.

Digitized by Google

STANDARD BOOKS

Blavatsky, H. P. Five Years of Theosophy	cloth,	$2.50
Key to Theosophy	cloth,	2.50
Secret Doctrine, The, Vols. I and II and Index	cloth,	12.50
Theosophical Glossary	cloth,	5.00
Voice of the Silence	cloth, 35; leather,	1.00
Cavé. Fragments, Volume I.	boards,	1.00
Volume II	boards,	1.00
Hillard, Katherine. Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine	cloth,	3.00
Teacher of Theosophy, A	paper,	.05
Johnston, Charles. Bhagavad Gita	Translated, annotated; cloth,	1.25
	limp leather, India paper,	1.75
From the Upanishads	paper,	.50
Parables of the Kingdom, The	paper,	.50
Patanjali's Yoga Sutras	Translated, annotated; cloth, India paper,	1.25
Song of Life, The	paper,	.75
Judge, William Q. Bhagavad Gita	Edited; cloth, 48; leather,	1.00
Culture of Concentration	paper,	.10
Letters That Have Helped Me, Volume I.	cloth,	1.00
Volume II	cloth,	1.00
Ocean of Theosophy	cloth,	1.10
Keightley, Archibald. Spiritual Life, The	paper,	.30
Theosophy as an Influence in Life	paper,	.25
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger. Meditation	paper,	.30
Talks on Religion	cloth,	1.50
Theosophical Society and Theosophy, The	paper,	.20
Sinnett, A. P. Esoteric Buddhism	cloth,	2.00
Occult World, The	cloth,	3.00
Walker, E. D. Reincarnation	cloth,	1.15
Idyll of the White Lotus	cloth,	1.25
Light on the Path	cloth, 25; leather,	1.00
Through the Gates of Gold	cloth,	1.25

The foregoing prices are now correct but all publishers make their prices to us subject to change without notice.

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Devotional: Bhagavad Gita; Fragments; From the Upanishads; Letters That Have Helped Me; Light on the Path; The Parables of the Kingdom; The Song of Life; Through the Gates of Gold; Voice of the Silence.
Philosophical: Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine; Five Years of Theosophy; Key to Theosophy; Reincarnation; The Secret Doctrine; Talks on Religion; Theosophical Glossary; Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.
Inspirational: Culture of Concentration; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditation; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society; and Theosophy.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men—but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the *finer forces* of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, and no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impress neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avows its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it tenders most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religious and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of man's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

Digitized by Google

VOL XVIII. No. 4 APRIL, 1921 No. 72

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Quarterly

Published by The Theosophical Society of
[illegible] Washington Street
Brooklyn, New York

Price for nonmembers $1.00 per annum; single copies 25 cents

In Europe single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to [illegible], 21 Fred Court, [illegible] Cross Road, London, W.C. 2, England. Annual subscription price [illegible] pennsid.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XVIII. No. 4

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	289
FRAGMENTS	297
MATERIALISM AND SPIRITISM, I	298
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, II	312
IN THE HOUSE OF DEATH (Katha Upanishad)	321
WHY DO I FAIL?	327
FROM A JOURNAL	341
TAO TEH KING, I	346
STUDENTS' SCRAP BOOK	354
SCREEN OF TIME	359
LETTERS TO STUDENTS	369
REVIEWS	376
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	379
T. S. ACTIVITIES	382
INDEX	383

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered July 17, 1901, at Brooklyn, N. Y., as second-class matter, [illegible] Congress, [illegible] 1921.

Copyright, 1921, by The Theosophical Society.

Digitized by Google

APRIL, 1921

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

The Dangers of Psychism

A NUMBER of short treatises, in verse and prose, are attributed to the great Indian Teacher, Shankaracharya, though it is probable that the actual writing was done by his disciples. Among these treatises, there is one, *Vakya Sudha,* which has a particularly happy phrasing of the three worlds in relation to the seven principles of manifested life. The three worlds, beginning from below, are called "the ordinary world," "the looking-glass world," and "the transcendent world"; and the forms in which the One Spirit is manifested in these three worlds are called, in the same way, "the ordinary life," "the looking-glass life," and "the transcendent life," the last being in reality one with the Eternal.

This apt and lucid naming of the three worlds lends itself admirably to the purpose of the present "Notes and Comments." That purpose is, so far as may be possible, to indicate the character of the psychical world, which corresponds to the looking-glass world of our treatise; to show the place which the psychic world holds in normal development; and to describe certain morbid developments, which lead to confusion, and which are full of danger. The theme, therefore, is the normal and the abnormal activity of the psychic world.

It will be seen at once that the threefold division given above closely corresponds with St. Paul's division of man into body, soul and spirit; *psyche,* the psychical nature, being the middle term, somewhat loosely translated "soul."

The most important passage illustrating Paul's use of this threefold division, a passage which clearly shows what he means by the middle term, *psyche,* the psychical nature, is in the fifteenth chapter of the first letter to the disciples in Corinth. Neither in the Authorized nor in the Revised Version of 1881, is the passage satisfactorily translated. A closer rendering would be as follows:

Digitized by Google

"There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the radiance of the celestial is one, and the radiance of the terrestrial is another. There is one radiance of the sun, and another radiance of the moon, and another radiance of the stars. For star differs from star in radiance.

"So also is the rising up of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in radiance: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a psychical body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a psychical body, there is also a spiritual body.

"So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living *psyche;* The last Adam, a life-giving spirit. But that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is psychical; then the spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

So we have the threefold division: the terrestrial man, the psychical man and the spiritual man; exactly corresponding to the threefold division of our Sanskrit text: the ordinary man, the looking-glass man, and the transcendent man. And we have the further point in Paul's classification, that the psychical man "bears the image" of the earthy, again suggesting the simile of the looking-glass, the image in the mirror.

What does our Sanskrit text mean, when it calls the middle world the looking-glass world? The meaning is, that the middle world, the psychical world has, in fact, the character of a looking-glass. It reflects in itself both the world which is below it and the world which is above it. And, like a looking-glass, it reverses the images which it reflects, so that the positions of right and left are interchanged. It reflects and perverts.

We may think of the ordinary man of our threefold division, the terrestrial man of Paul's phrasing, as using directly the energies and perceptions of the physical body, but using them without being conscious that he is conscious. He has direct consciousness but no reflective consciousness, no true self-consciousness. To use the common phrase, which in this case has a sound basis in metaphysics, he perceives and acts, but he does not reflect. So far as concerns true self-consciousness, consciousness of his true self, it is simply not there.

How is he to be led to this true self-consciousness, this consciousness of his true self? How is he to be led to reflect?

It would seem that the universe has provided the looking-glass world exactly for this purpose. In order to see what he looks like, in order to reflect on himself, to become conscious of himself, he is provided with a looking-glass. And that looking-glass is the middle world of our threefold division, the psychical world; or, as the Sanskrit text calls it, the looking-glass world.

In our ordinary experience, the psychical world acts in this way:

Digitized by Google

we look at something, for example a tree. Two things happen: first, we see the tree outside us, as it grows in the earth; then we see the tree in our minds. We form a mental picture, a mind image, of the tree. It is reflected in our looking-glass world. So that there are two trees: the ordinary tree and the psychical tree. And we can carry the psychical tree away with us when we leave the ordinary tree behind.

This mirroring, this catching of images in the looking-glass of our psychical world, is the basis of memory. Shankaracharya compares the mind image to a picture painted on canvas. We actually paint such a picture of the tree, and carry it about with us. When we look at this picture, we say that we "remember" the tree.

If we were without desires and appetites, we might carry this process on indefinitely, simply gathering a multitude of pictures, and so enriching our memories.

But we are not by any means without desires. There is the desire of sensation. There is the desire of life. How are these two desires affected by the activity of the looking-glass world?

First, the desire of sensation. We may imagine the early races, like uncorrupted animals, eating to live; using the senses of taste and smell to distinguish between things wholesome and unwholesome; and, when they had eaten enough, forgetting all about food and turning their attention in some other direction.

And we may compare with this our own procedure. The gourmand, as he eats, rests his consciousness upon the rich flavour of what he is eating, pressing each delicate morsel against his palate, and giving it the fine essence of his attention. Instantly the activity of the looking-glass world comes in. A highly energized image of that attractive flavour is reflected in his psychical world; and, after an hour, or after many hours, he can turn to it and savour its relish anew.

It is a simple thing to see how greed and gluttony, the sins of the sense of taste, can grow up in this way. And it is easy to see that this process of focussing the consciousness on the activity of each sense, and thereby heaping up highly energized images of the things perceived by each sense in order to gloat over them, would make the operation of each sense morbid and unwholesome, creating a several sin for each several sense. The power of sight would become the lust of the eyes; and so with the other senses.

In this way, through the operation of the looking-glass world, the psychical man heaps upon himself dynamic images of the things perceived by his senses. As Paul says, he makes himself in the image of the earthy.

So much for the desire of sensation. Then there is the desire of life, the desire to feel oneself an intensely vibrating living being. Here again the looking-glass world comes in, sophisticating the activities of the natural man. The natural man would use his powers vigorously and

Digitized by Google

cleanly, when there was occasion to use them, and, when the occasion passed, would forget about them, and turn to something else, which he would carry out in the same simple way. So, we may surmise, it was with the early races.

But, when the activity of the looking-glass world supervened, the hitherto unconscious natural man began to rest his consciousness in his vigorous activity, to savour it, to make pictures of himself in his mind, doing this or that thing admirably well, and to make pictures of other natural men doing the same kind of thing. Comparison soon led to emulation, jealousy, the ambition to outdo others. And the contemplation of himself in his inner looking-glass had the effect so characteristic of looking-glasses. It led to self-admiration and vanity.

These things are so much matters of our daily and hourly experience, that we take them altogether for granted. They seem to us the normal order of things; and we call "natural" what is really not natural at all, but an inversion of the true order of nature.

For we conceive that the true order of nature, the original divine plan, was that the looking-glass world should indeed be used as the mirror, making possible self-consciousness, consciousness of self; but that this mirror should not come into use until we had so far progressed as to be able to look into it from above, instead of from below.

Let us think of the uncorrupted natural man as we have described him, the man of the earlier races; and let us imagine that, after he had gained a firm possession of the whole range of his natural powers, but a possession still unconscious, still without reflective self-consciousness, without consciousness of self, he had been transported directly to the transcendent world, and had there begun to build what Paul calls the spiritual body. Already firmly established in the transcendent world, with the essence of immortality, of spiritual life, already in his veins, so to speak, he could then, through the mirroring power of the looking-glass world, have come to a wise and sane self-consciousness, a consciousness of himself as an immortal, gaining this self-consciousness by watching himself in the mirror; looking, as it were, into the upper side, the spiritual side of the mirror, which reflects divine and heavenly things.

Man would in this way have come into possession of a true self-consciousness, a consciousness of his true self, without sin. And, beginning with this true self-consciousness, he could then have gone forward, scaling the magnificent heights of the Eternal; carrying into the heart of the Eternal this treasure of spiritual self-consciousness, making the Eternal realize its own glory, and so fulfilling the divine plan for the progress of all Being.

This is, perhaps, what is suggested by Paul, in the second letter to the disciples at Corinth: But we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the radiance of the Master, are changed into the same image from radiance to radiance, even as by the Spirit of the Master.

Digitized by Google

Let us try to work this out a little more in detail. Going back over the steps we took, in describing the psychical growth of man under desire, let us see what might have happened, had he approached the mirror from above; had he looked down upon the looking-glass world, instead of breaking through into it from beneath.

We have supposed him to be established in the transcendent world, and beginning to build the celestial body. But we do not mean that he has lost his footing in the natural world, or has left his natural body permanently behind him. He still, in our supposition, dwells in the natural world, wearing a natural body; but it is a body clean and uncorrupted, moving in a world sinless and full of beauty.

We can conceive, then, this happy, unfallen man moving among the things of the natural world, yet using a perception already illumined with divinity; having spiritual consciousness, responding to spiritual law, but not yet spiritually self-conscious; being a spirit indeed, but not yet knowing himself as a spirit.

Moving thus in the natural world, with consciousness rooted in the spiritual world, he would accumulate a gallery of mind images, but without the stigma of sin. From this picture gallery he would gain a sense of himself as having duration, of continuity, by storing up mind-images of himself doing many things, through many days and years; and, from each memory, he would deduce a corresponding expectation, the mind-picture of himself doing the same thing, exercising the same energy or power, in some future time and place. Thus looking with forward and reverted eye, he would come into consciousness of his immortality, would awake to the reality of his duration; would not only be an immortal, but would know himself to be immortal, entering into immortal self-consciousness, consciousness of his immortal self.

Something like this, we conceive, was the divine plan for the evolution of man the immortal from the earlier natural man. But, according to an ancient tradition of the Eastern Wisdom, as the Powers of Good formed each energy of man, the Powers of Evil pierced it with their enchantments. As soon as the natural man was formed, the Powers of Evil made it possible for him to break into the mirror-world from beneath; made it possible for him to become self-conscious before he had gained spiritual consciousness; and thus made it possible for him, through the operation of the looking-glass world, to develop a sin for every sense, instead of developing a luminous, divine power.

Yet even now, through the operation of the same Powers of Good, and by their ceaseless help and guidance, it is possible for him to retrieve himself; possible for him to catch the gleams of heavenly light coming down from the celestial world, the light now brought close to him and within his reach by the mediation of the Powers of Good. He still has the divinely bestowed opportunity to follow the gleam, to trace that stream of benignant light back toward its fountain head in the Eternal; and,

Digitized by Google

in this way, to gain the true self-consciousness that was destined for him, consciousness of himself as divine and immortal, an undivided part of the supreme Eternal.

But, because the Powers of Evil broke the way for him prematurely into the mirror-world, thus piercing each of his energies with their enchantments, he follows the upward path burdened with a terrible handicap. He carries the whole weight of the images of the earthy, perversely accumulated and heaped upon his shoulders. He is wrapped in a false self-consciousness, the consciousness of a false self, the lower personality, which is the sum of the images of the earthy which he has mirrored and painted upon his psychical nature.

To take another tradition, also drawn from the Eastern Wisdom, unfallen natural man was set in the midst of the garden of the world, the world which, but for human sin, would still be in all its parts a garden of loveliness. And in the garden grew the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which is the psychical world, the looking-glass world of our Sanskrit treatise. He was forbidden to eat of the fruit of that tree. It was not intended that, as natural man, he should enter the psychic world. This should have come only after he had been implanted in the spiritual world, the transcendent world of the Indian teaching.

But the Tempter showed mankind the way to taste the forbidden fruit, to force a premature and dangerous entry into the psychical world; and mankind, doing this, thereupon began to sin, corrupting every sense by smearing it with psychic relish and allurement. And, through the same power of the looking-glass world, he built up a false image of himself, of his own natural body, infusing it with reflective consciousness and thus creating the false personality. Thus he built up a psychical picture gallery of alluring and clogging images of the earthy, and set a vain, self-centred image of himself as king in the midst of the gallery.

The fall made possible and necessary, the redemption. Because man, while unconscious and, therefore, not yet responsible, had been turned by Evil Powers into the way of sin, the Divine Powers were thereby given the right to intervene to restore the injured work, to bring man back to the way of righteousness and immortality. But, because of sin which, at first unconscious, was continued with consciousness and deliberation, the divine path, which should have been a path of joy, has become a path of peril; there are dangers at every stage of the way through the psychical world.

Even the images from above, the luminous rays of the sun, the radiance of the stars, reflected to him by the looking-glass are, by their very definition, reflections, inverted images; pictures, if you wish, in which the right hand appears as the left, the left hand as the right. And, because of this very nature of the world of reflections, there is at each moment the danger of being allured by the reflection, even the reflected light of heaven; the danger of following the bent, reverted ray,

Digitized by Google

instead of tracing the light back to its divine source, and thus gaining entrance into the transcendent world.

It is a perilous journey through this maze of mirrors because there is, at every moment, the danger of our being fascinated by the image of ourselves in the mirror; when we have caught a ray of light, there is the danger of our halting on the way in order to admire the new luminousness thereby thrown upon our own faces; there is the incessant danger of self-praise and vanity.

It would seem that this inherent element of confusion is what is indicated in an often quoted phrase of Paul's, at the end of the chapter on charity; the phrase which the Authorized Version renders thus:

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known."

This translation suggests a comparison which, it would seem, was not at all in Paul's mind, namely, the difficulty of seeing through a dirty window, or an uneven, semi-opaque pane of glass, which distorts and disguises what is seen through it. But the thought in Paul's mind was really quite different. He was thinking, not of a pane of glass, but of a metal mirror, as the Revised Version recognizes. So that the phrase might be rendered correctly, even if somewhat awkwardly:

"For now we see by means of a metal mirror, enigmatically, perplexingly; but then face to face."

The enigma, the perplexity, arises from the inversion of the image in the mirror; as though, holding a mirror before our faces, we caught glimpses of something over our shoulders, seeing right and left reversed.

It remains to bring the matter to a focus; to speak of a particular danger which continually besets us. In essence, it has been indicated already, but we may make it more concrete.

The danger is this: we have come, let us say, to the point where we have recognized not only the killing burden of the images of the earthy, which we have heaped upon ourselves, but also something of the possibility of escape and redemption, some gleam of celestial light breaking downward to us through the clouds. We realize that the upward journey can be made; that there is a way, a path leading home.

That fairly describes, perhaps, the experience of nearly everyone who, in the almost fifty years since The Theosophical Society was founded, has joined its ranks and has caught some realization of its ideals. So many have caught a glimpse of the light. But so few remain.

Perhaps those who have not remained may be divided into two classes. First, those who quite lost faith in the light from above, and turned their entire attention once more to the images of the earthy in their psychical picture galleries. Second, those who, setting out toward the goal, catching some gleam of the heavenly light, yet lacked the purity of heart to make the journey, and were allured by the images in the

Digitized by Google

looking-glass world, the distorted pictures of the things which are from above.

With two aspects only need we deal: the psychical images of spiritual powers; and the alluring, corrupting image of oneself possessing and wielding these powers, to the admiration of oneself and others.

What takes place then is an abortive birth, a premature and delusive outburst of life, which does not belong to the natural world, but which likewise falls short of the spiritual world.

Take the old comparison of the divine life in us, to the sacred lotus. Rooted in the earth, it passes through the water, and blossoms in the air and sunlight. But what disaster, when the lotus blossom, instead of passing safely as a closed bud through the turbid water, prematurely opens beneath the water, soiling and rotting its petals, while the pollen, the symbol of the renewal of life, is washed away.

This is an exact picture of what happens in what we may call morbid psychical development; this is the danger of psychism.

It is, if you wish so to describe it, an inflammation of the psychic body; an inflammation expressing itself in two ways.

First, there is an inflamed interest in psychic powers which are, at their very best, only looking-glass distortions of the true spiritual powers; a peeping curiosity about clairvoyance, clairaudience, messages from the unseen world; an inflammation of the surface of the psychic body, a hyper-sensitiveness expressing itself in visions and voices.

It is difficult to say just at what point along this line insanity begins; in all likelihood the inmates of our asylums are people who see psychic pictures, and cannot distinguish them from physical things.

But this wandering in the shapeless land is only the lesser half of the penalty of psychism. The greater penalty is an inflamed and assertive vanity; the overpowering desire to set up as a teacher, in virtue of these voices and visions; the longing to pose as an authentic bringer of light.

To state the thing prosaically, these people not only announce that their voices and visions are Theosophy; they further announce that they themselves are the inspired leaders of the Movement.

This is not an essay in history. Yet it will not be difficult to apply what has been said to critical phases of the history of our Movement. It will not be difficult to identify psychism in action.

And it may be affirmed, in conclusion, that this single element has been the bane of the Theosophical Movement from the outset; that it, and its exponents, are the greatest obstacle in the way of presenting Theosophy in a sane way to a world that sorely needs it; that this same tendency of psychism, in one or other of its forms, is the menace in the future against which we must be ceaselessly on guard—not alone in others, but in ourselves also.

Digitized by Google

FRAGMENTS

AGAIN the voice called from long, long distances: Give ear, give ear;—and I gave ear, and this is what it said to me.

In the immemorial ages man looked on vanity, and loving it, departed from the truth, and departing from the truth, lost all knowledge of the light, lost all knowledge of the Way; and living in the darkness he lost his eyes, and he lost his ears, and he lost his touch, and all his other senses, save a mistaken notion of them which led him further and further astray.

While in this living death he would have wholly died, save that the Great Ones in their compassion came, one after another one, and brought light into his darkness, and sound into his awful silences, and a quickening touch that stirred a sleeping memory. So that he heard a call, a call,—a voice calling from long, long distances, across the bridges of space, beyond the arches of time. This voice calling, was an agony to him, and he fought it in blind fury, cursing the pain of it, crushed by the sorrow of it. Then he tried to forget it in darkness again, pulling the covers of material life about his ears and striving to sleep.

But the Great Ones would not let him sleep; they goaded him with their call, they flashed their lights into his unwilling eyes, they gave him no rest from their harryings and pitiless reminders, they wrote upon the walls of his every feast:—Beware, O man, thou art immortal, and Eternity awaits thee. Thine enemy approaches, and thine house shall be desolate and ruined. Listen to the haunting strain of thy lost inheritance. Arise, the Father calls, turn home.

This is the history of the world as the Great Ones see it, looking across our bridges of space, looking through our arches of time. But one hears and follows, and another hears and follows, and then another one. Slowly they go, across the bridges of space, through the arches of time, dragging weary feet, and sighing heavily. Then—a rose-flush in the distant sky, a murmur, a pause, a cry of joy that rends the night. Those who hear only half believe—they were dreaming, they say.

Then the voice calls and calls again from long, long distances.

CAVÉ.

Digitized by Google

MATERIALISM AND SPIRITISM

TO whatever extent a man's philosophy is his own, and not merely borrowed from another, it must be rooted in his own experience; and if we examine, in the light of this truism, the conditions which marked the western world in the latter half of the nineteenth century, we shall see how inevitable it was that they should have given rise to a materialistic philosophy. A long period of peace and prosperity, in which human life seemed more secure, and human comfort more widespread than ever before, enabled life to be lived with little thought of death or what might lie beyond it; and the amazingly rapid development of natural science, unequalled since the schools of Alexandria in the third century before Christ, was revealing such new and unsuspected material forces and potentialities, and so subordinating them to man's will and enlisting them in the service of his convenience, that his life seemed to rest at every point upon matter, and spirit to be little more than a metaphysical abstraction of an outworn age. When one might work so rich a mine, lying immediately at hand and with the ore outcropping over all the surface, there was little incentive to explore more distant fields or laboriously to tunnel to deeper levels.

But with the first decade of the twentieth century it became apparent that the same causes which produced this materialism must ultimately tend to undermine and wipe it away. The thrusting probe of science was penetrating into the hollowness of matter as through a thin and brittle crust. Breaking down the material atom before our sight, it foreshadowed the revelation of an inner world of force and substance, invisible and intangible, but immeasurably more potent than the material world which it interpenetrated and supported. And on the other hand, the increasing sense of dependence upon material things, and the continued confinement of intellectual and acquisitive energy to the material plane, had resulted in such loss of hold upon spiritual principles, and such blindness to any true vision of life's deeper values and purposes, that the war of conquest and plunder which Germany believed she could successfully wage against Europe, had come to seem to her people a small price to pay for the rapid aggrandizement of their material prosperity.

Thus materialism had but to be pushed sufficiently far to prove its own undoing, for no materialistic philosophy can meet the demands of the spirit which war entails on those who are unjustly attacked. It is not possible for a man to sacrifice all that materialism calls good, in obedience to an inner loyalty which materialism either denies or ignores, without becoming conscious of something in himself which transcends matter and which he feels death cannot touch. With the birth of this consciousness he enters a world of new needs and new values, for which

Digitized by Google

the old order of his thought offers no explanation. Materialism can no longer satisfy him, and he seeks instinctively for some deeper and broader view of life by which he may orient himself to the new facts of his experience.

Though prompted by the same need and directed to the same end, this search led to quite different results in France and in England; and the return to the Church, and the revivifying of the established forms of religion, which have marked these last years in France, have not been paralleled in England. As we recall to memory the character of the religious literature the war produced in these two countries, and choosing more or less at random from those which circulated most widely, compare such books as Donald Hankey's *A Student in Arms* with Antoine Redier's *Comrades in Courage,* Coningsby Dawson's *The Glory of the Trenches* with Ferdinand Belmont's *A Crusader of France,* or *An English Chaplain at the Front* with *Priests in the Firing Line,* we become aware of a contrast that does much to explain the failure of Protestantism where Catholicism succeeded. As Donald Hankey wrote, "In the hour of danger and wounds and death many a man has realized with a shock that the articles of his creed about which he was most contentious mattered very, very little, and that he had somewhat overlooked the articles that proved to be vital." The Chaplains of the Church of England seem largely to have forgotten that their creed included a belief in the communion of saints and the continued humanity of the Master. Institutionalism could not bridge the gap they thus left between God and man; and their own devoted self-giving, their own human love and touch, however deep and tender, could not lift the impersonality of their faith to the needs of those who craved a ministry of the spirit and the assurance of a companionship of the soul which death could not sever.

It is perhaps true that something of this note of impersonality is inherent in the very genesis of the Protestant churches, but it is difficult to escape the conviction that it has been increased by an unconscious yielding to the materialism in which it has been immersed; and that the little emphasis it lays upon the continuation after death of that rich warmth of personal love and companionship, which makes life dear to us, is in part due to a lessened faith. A generation ago men turned from the churches because of their "other-worldliness," and Protestantism sought to meet them with its new doctrine of the Kingdom which was to be brought down to earth. To-day, when the tide has changed, and it is other-worldliness that men seek, the churches seem to speak with uncertain voice, doubting and timid. Perhaps it is this, more than any other single factor, that explains why the reaction against materialism in England and America has contributed so little to organized religion. It has proved easier for France to forget the Vatican than for England to forget vacuity.

Digitized by Google

One of the most noticeable results of these conditions is the recrudescence of Spiritism which has spread through England and America, enlisting the new interest in the life hereafter, and drawing to its support not only the uncritical and the superstitious, but some of the ablest intellects of our generation. It is easy to understand the appeal of this movement at a time when there is scarcely a family in England that is not in mourning for its dead, and while the evidence for their continued existence is still so new and startling as to preclude all thought of the possible cost at which it is obtained. The mechanics of mediumship are little understood, but while mediums exist it would be indeed strange if millions of men could be taken violently from the physical life to which all their desires still cling, without increasing the pressure from the astral world to which the medium responds.

It is not the purpose of this article to attempt an analysis of spiritualistic phenomena, or to trace the history of the modern movement from what are usually regarded as its beginnings in the manifestations associated with the Fox family, in Wayne County, New York, in 1847. A work purporting to do this lies before us, with references to a bibliography of close to a hundred books, exclusive of the many volumes of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. It is written by Baron Johan Liljencrants, A.M., S.T.D.; entitled *Spiritism and Religion, "Can You Talk to the Dead?"*; printed with the Imprimatur of Cardinal Farley; and with a foreword of appreciation by Cardinal Gibbons, which closes with the statement: "This book on Spiritism is scholarly; it is scientific; it is sound in its thinking. I consider it a real advance in the literature of Spiritism." It represents, therefore, with as much authority as anything but a papal pronunciamento may hope to do, the Roman Catholic view of Spiritism, and, as such, its attitude and conclusions are of interest to us.

Dr. Liljencrants deals separately with the physical and psychical phenomena which Spiritism has produced, but comes to the same conclusion with regard to each, that there is at present no *positive* proof that these phenomena involve the intervention of discarnate personalities, or definitely establish spirit-identity. But his pages leave us with the feeling that this conclusion is as much forced by the purpose for which he writes as by the evidence he examines, and that the defence of his thesis has been no easy task. A master of the close and subtle logic which is his church's heritage from the mediæval schoolmen, his argument is often a refreshing contrast to the loose thinking that is prevalent to-day; yet, though the forms of scholarly detachment and scientific impartiality are scrupulously preserved, they do not always convince the reader of their complete sincerity, and with each succeeding chapter the impression deepens that the spirit of the book is not that of genuine scientific inquiry in which the facts are examined with an open mind. It suggests, rather, the able summing up of an attorney for the defence, whose duty to his

Digitized by Google

client requires that he should minimize the evidence adduced by the prosecution, and so deal with the residuum, which cannot be ignored, as to show that it still leaves a reasonable doubt of his client's guilt. It is undoubtedly true that so much of this evidence has proved fraudulent as to justify the most suspicious attitude toward the remainder, and we cannot blame Dr. Liljencrants for his contention that one must "exclude the hypothesis of spirit intervention in the presence of a possibly adequate natural hypothesis;" but it is difficult to follow him to his conclusion that *all* the physical phenomena produced through mediums admit of an "adequate natural hypothesis" in hallucination or trickery and fraud.

In considering the psychic phenomena, and the cross-correspondences and other evidence tending to establish spirit identity, Dr. Liljencrants wisely points out that we do not yet know the full possibilities of telepathic communication, or what store of knowledge there may be in the "subliminal self," or in some "secondary personality" to which the medium may be sensitive. As he regards thought transference as a "natural" phenomenon, involving no trespass upon the domain of religion, his treatment of it is much freer, and it may be of interest to quote from certain of his pages.

"The spontaneous phenomena of apparitions and voices of the living cannot reasonably be denied in the face of the mass of evidence which has been gathered. We have dealt with phantoms of the living to exclude any hypothesis of 'the dead coming back.' There are only two possible explanations — since it must be admitted that chance coincidence could not adequately cover the *ensemble* of evidence:—either we must admit some sort of extra-sense communication between mind and mind, unconsciously produced by the transmitter, or we must accept the phenomena as indicating the objective presence of his externalized double. . . .

"The actuality of thought transference as we have defined the term has been, and is, denied by a number of scientists chiefly on the ground that their own experiments have failed. But it is difficult to understand this attitude. The evidence furnished by experiments which have succeeded, cannot be overthrown by any number of failures, unless it can be shown that what was regarded as success depended upon error. We do not think this can be shown in the experiments above referred to. First of all, a study of the reports, one after another, will convince any candid mind that we are not confronted with a series of chance coincidences and guesses. The experiments with numbers alone would be sufficient to carry this conviction. That other causes such as judgment from gestures, speech, facial expressions, sound from the movement of the pencil on the paper, whispering with closed lips, etc., must be excluded in cases of experiments conducted with agent and percipient in different rooms, and, *a fortiori*, in different localities, is self-evident. . . .

"For our own part we think that failures depend upon our lack of

Digitized by Google

knowledge of the laws and conditions which govern the phenomena. For while we grant that an idea has been conveyed from one mind to another, we do not know *how* it was conveyed, whether from brain to brain by means of ether vibrations, or whether by externalization of 'psychic force.' We do not know what process insures its transmission from the agent, nor its reception by the percipient. As a fact, we know no more than that the agent tried to convey the idea and that it was conveyed. . . .

"We have referred to the activity of 'secondary personalities' and of the 'subliminal self,' and also to telepathic communications. As we have pointed out, these things do not *explain* Spiritism. But it is incontestable that these notions cover a number of facts—by no means fully known or fully explored—yet facts of nature, to a large extent capable of experimental reproduction. So far as we know those facts, they seem adequate to cover the problems offered by the psychical phenomena of Spiritism. No doubt we are moving towards a fuller knowledge and understanding of these facts, which may in its turn alter their apparent relation to the spiritistic phenomena. In the meantime we can form no other judgment regarding the psychical phenomena of Spiritism than that they have not been proven to be preternatural."

Few students of Theosophy could wish to quarrel with this conclusion of Dr. Liljencrants, for Madame Blavatsky's insistence upon the same point, and the practical demonstrations she gave of the exercise of these "natural" powers, are both too well known and too convincing. But it may well be questioned whether Spiritism itself contends that its phenomena are in any true sense preternatural, or whether the mere fact of communication between the living and the dead must be regarded as any more of a departure from natural law than is the distant action of hypnotic control which Dr. Liljencrants accepts. Our real quarrel with Spiritism is not that its results are too miraculous to be believed, but that its methods are too degrading to be practised.

But we must not do Dr. Liljencrants the injustice of letting it be assumed that he is himself indifferent to this side of the question, though he has not the same reasons as have we to realize its primary importance. Thus he writes:

"And if we admit immortality, which after all is the central belief in Spiritism and logically follows upon an acceptance of the spirituality of the soul, we must also admit that the purpose for which man was created is to be found in a higher, spiritual life, beyond the more imperfect earthly form from which the soul frees itself at death. Now, who will say that it is in keeping with such a purpose that the soul, freed from the more imperfect material associations to which it was bound by its union with the body, and elevated to a purely spiritual life—and, according to conservative Christianity, to a life face to face with its Creator—should busy itself moving furniture, producing scents and

Digitized by Google

little lights, making sundry noises, pulling people's hair, playing pranks on clergymen and kissing French and Italian investigators of the occult, all at the nocturnal séances of some more or less suspicious character who will vie with it in imitating the tricks? A preacher proposing such a Heaven would at the most find an audience among the naughty children of his town. Or, on the whole, would it be in keeping with such purpose that the soul should exhaust itself giving to mankind in the flesh evidence, for the most part doubtful, of its continued existence?

"And would we expect an infinitely wise Creator even to tempt the liberated soul to such retroaction by failing to provide for mankind the Revelation it might need in order to attain the end for which it was created? Certainly, were a Revelation needed, God would not leave its manifestation to chance."

Spiritism is no new thing. In essence it is not other than the necromancy whose record is as old as human history, and which was condemned in passage after passage in the Old Testament (as witness Leviticus xix: 31; xx: 6; Deuteronomy xviii: 10-12; I. Samuel xxviii: 9; II. Kings xxiii: 24; etc.). Its practitioners were alternately feared and consulted, and execrated and burned, not because their claims were proved false, but because they were proved true; and because there has ever been a right instinct in mankind to hold in abhorrence those who would bring back the dead to a world that should hold them no longer.

The closing chapters of Dr. Liljencrants's book, "Spiritism as a Religion," and "Moral Aspects of Spiritism," are both able and interesting, but the grounds of his criticism are too generally theological for us to analyse them here. We could wish that this were not so, for he is dealing with matters of primary importance when he points out that, "Beside the basic malice of superstition, the spiritistic practices involve a direct danger of religious perversion in so far as the lucubrations of the mediums are accepted as revealed religious truths"; and that, "Finally, although remote, the danger of diabolical intercourse can not be said to be absent." That this latter danger is not so remote as Dr. Liljencrants's words suggest, is made apparent in much spiritistic literature. If space permits we shall return to this point later, in connection with Mr. J. S. M. Ward's *Gone West,* but before we leave Dr. Liljencrants's book we would make one more quotation from his pages.

"If we admit as a possibility that some phenomena might be caused by spirits, still this fails to leave a warrant for belief in Immortality or for our acceptance of the 'spirit messages' as forming a true Revelation. For, granting the existence of a spirit world, must we not also grant that it may be and in all probability is inhabited by other spirits than human souls? And what assurance do we have that the spirits which possibly would communicate have the knowledge, or power, or will, to reveal to us the truths necessary for our salvation?

"To go still further in concessions, even though we should accept,

Digitized by Google

not as a scientific conclusion, but rather as our opinion, that certain spirit-messages would show the identity of the communicator with some person departed, the most we could logically infer would be that a certain being *so far* had survived bodily death. But from this inference, which can not at present be based upon scientific evidence, the step is long to proof for permanent persistence or *Immortality* inherent in *all human beings.*"

A foot note adds a reference to Sir William Barrett's *On the Threshold of the Unseen,* page 287: "Here let me remark that the inference commonly drawn that spirit communications teach us the necessary and inherent immortality of the soul is, in my opinion, a mischievous error. It is true they show us that life can exist in the unseen, and—if we accept the evidence for 'identity'—that some we have known on earth are still living and near us, but entrance on a life after death does not necessarily mean *immortality,* i. e., eternal persistence of our personalities; nor does it prove that survival after death extends to *all.* Obviously no experimental evidence can ever demonstrate either of these beliefs, though it may and does remove the objections raised as to the possibility of survival."

Sir William Barrett enjoys a high reputation among the adherents of Spiritism, but in spite of his exposition of its fallaciousness, the common impression persists that, if the phenomena of Spiritism are genuine, personal immortality is assured to us all, being inherent in man as man, irrespective of the character of our life and effort while on earth. The pernicious consequences of this "mischievous error," contradicting the teachings of every great spiritual teacher and undermining at least one of the corner stones of the moral life, were pointed out in a recent issue of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, and are, indeed, too obvious to need further elucidation. But that it is an error can not be too strongly emphasized. Between the maxim of materialism, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," and that of vulgar Spiritism, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we live," there can be little to choose,—save that in the latter no term is set to its degradation of human life.

Dr. Liljencrants's review of Spiritism appeared in the latter part of 1918. In May of the same year, Dr. W. J. Crawford, a Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering at the Municipal Technical Institute of Belfast, and author of several works on mechanics, published in book form the detailed records of a series of eighty-seven experiments in which levitation, and other physical phenomena, were produced through the mediumship of Miss Kathleen Goligher and a circle consisting of the members of her family. At the time these experiments were conducted, from 1915 to 1916, Miss Goligher was from seventeen to eighteen years of age. She was paid nothing for her services, and is "very averse to looking upon her mediumship as a commercial asset." All the members of the circle were Dr. Crawford's personal friends, for

Digitized by Google

whose character he vouches, and to whom Spiritism is a religion, the séances being "invariably opened and closed by prayer." Dr. Crawford states unequivocally, "This is to be thoroughly understood. *In no experiment which I describe in this book was there any contact between any portion of the body or dress of the medium or sitters and the material body under psychic action.*" Yet objects were moved around the room, a table levitated, or held so firmly to the floor that it could not be lifted by a strong man, and all done, not at haphazard or chance, but in accordance with the successive requests made by Dr. Crawford to the "operators." He tells us that, "A great many people have been invited to visit the circle and witness the phenomena. I think I can say that not one of all these has come away from it without the assurance that 'there is something in psychic force,' be he previously sceptic, believer, or a sitter 'on the fence.' Of course, the visitor is not always certain that the phenomena are produced by spirits of the dead; but at least he is sure of this, that they are genuine and in no way due to normal action on the part of the medium or members of the circle."

Dr. Crawford explored the region within the circle in order to determine the nature and intensity of the stresses produced during levitation, using for this purpose weighing machines, spring balances, manometers and electrical devices. The medium's chair was placed on a weighing machine, and the variation of her own weight—amounting to as much as forty pounds—noted, as well as the reaction under the levitating table at different heights above the floor. From the correlation of these observations Dr. Crawford is led to the conclusion that the phenomena are produced by what students of Theosophy might recognize as an extrusion of some portion of the medium's astral body, which he describes as "flexible rod-like projections from the body of the medium."

"The principle characteristics of a rod are as follows:

"(1) It is capable of being pushed straight out from the body of the medium and being pulled straight into the body of the medium. It has not an indefinite limit of extension, but at its end can reach, under favorable conditions, to a distance of about 5 feet from her body, and can there act on the table and move it about. . . . The medium's end of the rod, as it is pulled back into her body, is absorbed in her; perhaps the rod is ultimately made up of great bundles of thread-like projections and the whole rod is anchored to her like the roots of a tree.

"(2) The rod is capable of to-and-fro motion horizontally over a considerable arc, and can thus move bodies about within the circle formed by the sitters; it has also a limited motion in a vertical plane.

"(3) The rod, while capable of in-and-out movement from the medium's body, can be fixed or locked at any required position within its limits of extension, so that in such a position it becomes a cantilever.

Digitized by Google

"(4) The rod can transmit pulling and pushing forces.

"(5) The free end of the rod is capable (at least sometimes) of gripping bodies by adhesion.

"(6) All the motions of the rod are worked from within the body of the medium.

"(7) The dimensions of the rod can vary greatly; its cross section may have different values, and various modifications can be made of the shape and condition of the free end. . . ."

As to the substance of which these projections consist, Dr. Crawford has no theory to offer, but believes that later experiment may tend to identify it with "something that appears to be matter," which he has occasionally felt immediately below the under surface of the table during levitation. "It has a cold, clammy, reptilian feeling impossible adequately to describe in words, but which once felt, the experimenter always recognizes again." And Dr. Crawford adds, "I was struck, when reading over some of Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's experiments of materialisation, to notice that in the first stages of materialisation the matter issuing from the medium gave the same or a very similar sensation to the hand; the feeling being described as cold and clammy, one of the assistants even remarking that it felt as though a small reptile were lying in his hand."

Dr. Crawford does not deal with the question of "spirit-identity," and though he constantly refers to the "operators," who are utilizing and directing this emanation from the medium, he adduces no evidence to show that they are "spirits of the dead."

He does, however, consider the circulation and interchange of psychic substance that takes place throughout the circle of sitters during the séance, describing a photograph in which it is made visible, and finding evidence for its actuality in the sitters' variation in weight. As it appears to be this same emanation from the astral, rendered "cold, clammy, and reptilian," which is thus circulated through medium and sitters, we may understand at least one reason why such séances are to be avoided.

To illustrate a quite different side of the spiritualistic literature, we may choose the books of Mr. J. S. M. Ward, *Gone West,* to which we have already referred, and its sequel, *A Subaltern in Spirit Land.* They are not concerned with the phenomena of the séance room, and are, indeed, entirely lacking in direct evidential value, but purport to give information of the life after death, obtained through trance vision and automatic writing from recently deceased members of the author's family. They thus belong to the same category as *Letters from a Living Dead Man,* which was reviewed in the QUARTERLY a number of years ago, but are much more graphic and sensational. As they depict the experiences of a number of different people, they are divided into parts dealing respectively with hell, the astral plane, and the lowest

Digitized by Google

division of the spiritual plane. Lurid though these books are, they possess a certain value because, to whatever extent they are believed, they must tend to re-emphasize the truth that man's future state depends upon his present efforts, and that the desires and habits which he cultivates in this life are the forces which move him in the life to come, drawing him to the plane to which they pertain. If the common conception of Spiritism implies a belief in immortality for all men, these visions make it evident that such immortality may be more to be dreaded than desired; and one must either read the story of "The Officer's" descent into hell, and arduous escape therefrom, as a sort of dime-novel of the hereafter, or be prompted to a salutary fear of the evil in one's own nature.

There are many passages suggestive of real experience, such as the vision of his past life on earth which confronts man on his entrance into the lowest division of the spirit world (as distinct from hell or the astral plane).

"Like a hideous nightmare, on every side visions seemed to press me round. They weighed me down. I, who but a moment before had seemed so light, now seemed to be crushed under an intolerable weight. I saw them not with mortal sight, I perceived them with my whole being.

"I call them visions, but they were in real bodily form, like tableaux, moving and acting again before me all my past.

"My past deeds crowded around me, not in any order, but like a dream, all at once. Oh! the anguish as once more rose up deeds long since forgotten. At last, after what seemed countless ages, an inspiration seemed to seize me, and I prayed. I had not done so for years and years, but now I prayed, 'O God, help me,' and as I prayed, really prayed, slowly the wild chaos began as it were to sort itself out. It, as it were, took a kind of chronological order, and the scenes took the form, as it were, of a street which stretched far away, far beyond my ken; and they will go on increasing as I progress till they reach to the judgment seat of God. And among them I saw many visions which came as a relief to my tired soul—little acts of kindness which I had long forgotten, times when I had resisted temptation. So I found, as it were, my location."

Perhaps we may see in this another reason for that constant self-examination which all religious treatises enjoin, that we may learn how to face our sins and to repent of them, so that they may not overwhelm us at the gates of heaven.

Another point of interest is the frank ignorance these "spirits" express, until after they have been at the "spirit school," of the conditions of life on any other planes than their own and those which are immediately above and below it.

"*J. W.* 'Is there Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory?'

Digitized by Google

"*H. J. L.* 'I do not know whether there is a Hell. You see, I know nothing at all save about my own set, and the ones above and below. There are plenty of old friends I expected to see and have not; but of course they may be and probably are only in another set. Those who do not believe are in the set below: after a time they come to us.'"

In a later communication *H. J. L.* considers that he has learned more, and attempts to impart his new information by the aid of a diagram, and a description from which the following is taken.

"For your general convenience let me tell you that this realm is divided as follows:—

"1. Belief with works.

"2. Belief without works.

"3. Half belief.

"4. Unbelief—Hell.

"When the soul has reached the highest plane of the first division, it goes through something that is akin to a second death, for there it leaves behind its spiritual [?] body. But the soul who attains to that state rejoices in its coming relief—it does not fear it as the mortals do death, for those souls who are not yet ready do not cross the barrier.

"Once they have crossed into the next realm, they cannot return. There are, including earth, seven such realms, of which the highest is to be with God.

"We who are here know only of the realm we are in, which we will call the sixth, the seventh being earth, which includes the astral plane.

"We cannot go to the fifth until our time has come, and then we cannot return.

"Still to this rule there are certain exceptions. Very rarely messengers are sent down to us from the realms above, but this only happens for some good reason, and is comparable to the visible and audible return of one who is dead, to earth.

"The other and more usual method is through a medium. Just as we communicate through you, so those in the fifth realm use a spirit in the higher planes of the sixth through whom to communicate. Any message from the fifth realm would thus have to pass through two mediums to reach the earth."

The interest of this passage is its assertion that it is only the earth-bound spirits,—those whose past habits and desires still hold them in immediate contact with the earth and prevent their rising to higher planes,—who generally are able (or willing) to communicate through mediums. This would in itself be an ample explanation of the combination of folly, ignorance and maliciousness, which so many "spirit" communications reveal—for it would be the ignorant, the foolish and the malicious who would be speaking. And we may note that in "The

Digitized by Google

Officer's" wanderings in hell he meets with communities which are entirely ignorant that they are not on earth or in heaven. But he meets, too, with those who are fully aware of their condition, and use their demoniacal powers for the degradation of men. Even the denizens of the astral plane may use their power of obsession to gratify physical desires, at the expense of their victims on earth; and from first to last we have a picture of the horrors to which any kind of mediumistic tendencies may subject their possessor, that may well make us grateful that, in the normal development of mankind, he should rise above these planes before his astral senses open to them.

We have been considering the spiritualistic movement as one of the more important forms which the reaction against materialism has taken in England and America. But as we reflect upon the actual significance of its phenomena, as they concern the dead rather than the living, we shall realize that it is in truth an expression of materialism's deepest penetration, the evidence of its hold upon the soul, as well as on the heart and mind of man—confining even the dead to earth, and still chaining their spirit to the things of flesh.

Yet Dante has shown us that the way from hell may lie through its deepest depths, and in the beginning of this article we saw that materialism had but to be pushed sufficiently far to prove its own undoing. It may well be that Spiritism will prove, in this manner, the means of liberating many minds from the dominion of a materialism that they could not otherwise throw off; and though it is a path which no student of Theosophy could possibly wish to tread, it must be that those who follow it, in honest search for truth and light, will in time be led by it to something better. There are many signs of this, and some of the most hopeful can be found in the writings of Sir Oliver Lodge.

Perhaps no recent work on Spiritism has so drawn, and so legitimately drawn, popular attention, as has Sir Oliver Lodge's *Raymond*. The author's eminence as a scientist, his long study of psychic phenomena, his scrupulous care to lay bare the exact nature of the evidence with which he deals and to avoid all overstatement, together with his transparent honesty and patent goodness of intent, combine to elicit interest and to give weight to his views. That his book will do harm, and not good, in so far as it tends to encourage mediumship and the consulting of mediums, needs no further argument. But the sincerity and unselfishness of his motive may bear fruit in other ways, and in the closing section of the book—where he is not dealing with Spiritism itself, so much as presenting fragments of his own philosophy of life—we find much that is closely allied to the teaching of Theosophy, and which should be widely helpful, could it be dissociated from Spiritism in appearance as it is independent of it in fact. We might fill many pages with quotations from these fragments of earnest, honest thought. But we shall choose only one:

"I am as convinced of continued existence, on the other side of

Digitized by Google

death, as I am of existence here. It may be said, you cannot be as sure as you are of sensory experience. I say I can. A physicist is never limited to direct sensory impressions, he has to deal with a multitude of conceptions and things for which he has no physical organ: the dynamic theory of heat, for instance, and of gases, the theories of electricity, of magnetism, of chemical affinity, of cohesion, aye, and his apprehension of the Ether itself, lead him into regions where sight and hearing and touch are impotent as direct witnesses, where they are no longer efficient guides. In such regions everything has to be interpreted in terms of the insensible, the apparently unsubstantial, and in a definite sense the imaginary. Yet these regions of knowledge are as clear and vivid to him as are any of those encountered in everyday occupations; indeed most commonplace phenomena themselves require interpretation in terms of ideas more subtle,—the apparent solidity of matter itself demands explanation,—and the underlying non-material entities of a physicist's conception become gradually as real and substantial as anything he knows. As Lord Kelvin used to say, when in a paradoxical mood, we really know more about electricity than we know about matter.

"That being so, I shall go further and say that I am reasonably convinced of the existence of grades of being, not only lower in the scale than man but higher also, grades of every order of magnitude from zero to infinity. And I know by experience that among these beings are some who care for and help and guide humanity, not disdaining to enter even into what must seem petty details, if by so doing they can assist souls striving on their upward course. And further it is my faith—however humbly it may be held—that among these lofty beings, highest of those who concern themselves directly with this earth, of all the myriads of worlds in infinite space, is One on whom the right instinct of Christianity has always lavished heartfelt reverence and devotion.

"Those who think that the day of the Messiah is over are strangely mistaken: it has hardly begun. In individual souls Christianity has flourished and borne fruit, but for the ills of the world itself it is an almost untried panacea. It will be strange if this ghastly war fosters and simplifies and improves a knowledge of Christ, and aids a perception of the ineffable beauty of his life and teaching: yet stranger things have happened; and, whatever the churches may do, I believe that the call of Christ himself will be heard and attended to, by a large part of humanity in the near future, as never yet it has been heard or attended to on earth.

"My own time down here is getting short; it matters little: but I dare not go till I have borne this testimony to the grace and truth which emanate from that divine Being,—the realization of whose tender-hearted simplicity and love for man may have been overlaid at times and almost lost amid well-intentioned but inappropriate dogma, but who is accessible as always to the humble and meek.

"Intercommunion between the states or grades of existence is not

Digitized by Google

limited to messages from friends and relatives, or to conversation with personalities of our own order of magnitude,—that is only a small and verifiable portion of the whole truth,—intercourse between the states carries with it occasional, and sometimes unconscious, communion with lofty souls who have gone before. The truth of such continued influence corresponds with the highest of the Revelations vouchsafed to humanity. This truth, when assimilated by man, means an assurance of the reality of prayer, and a certainty of gracious sympathy and fellow-feeling from one who never despised the suffering, the sinful, or the lowly; yea, it means more—it means nothing less than the possibility some day of a glance or a word of approval from the Eternal Christ."

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

(*To be continued*)

So likewise, when Christ that bright Sun has risen in our hearts above all things; when the demands of our bodily nature which are opposed to the spirit have been curbed and discreetly set in order; when we have achieved the virtues in the way of which you have heard in the first degree; when, lastly, through the ardour of our charity, all the pleasure, and all the peace, which we experience in these virtues, have been offered up and devoted to God, with thanksgiving and praise:—then, of all this there may come down a sweet rain of new inward consolation and the heavenly dew of the sweetness of God. This makes the virtues grow, and multiplies them twofold if we hinder it not. This is a new and special working, and a new coming of Christ into the loving heart. And by it a man is lifted up into a higher state than that in which he was before. On this height Christ says: Go ye out according to the way of this coming.—JOHN OF RUYSBROECK.

We should also rather seek our rest upon Him and in Him Whom we mean and love, than in any of the messengers He sends; that is to say, His gifts.—JOHN OF RUYSBROECK.

Digitized by Google

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

II

IN the history of the French Revolution by Mrs. Nesta Webster, referred to in a previous number of the QUARTERLY, perhaps the most important of the given causes of the revolution, next to the Orleanist conspiracy, was the activity of the German Order of Illuminati, headed by Adam Weishaupt. In the book itself, the magnitude and the menacing character of the program of this Order are strongly emphasized, while comparatively little information is given; but in the July number of *The Nineteenth Century*, Mrs. Webster, in an article entitled "Illuminism and World Revolution," gives a detailed history of the Order, not only linking it with the events of the French Revolution, but suggesting the probability of its active influence in the present world-situation.

There are several available histories of the Order. The one from which Mrs. Webster apparently draws most largely is the contemporary account published in 1798 by John Robison, a professor in the Royal University of Edinburgh, and a Mason familiar with Masonry all over Europe. The title of his book is *The Proofs of a Conspiracy Against All the Religions and Governments of Europe—Carried on in the Secret Meetings of Free Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies.* The facts are these: Dr. Adam Weishaupt (born 1748) was a professor of Canon Law in the University of Ingolstadt, Bavaria. He had been educated among the Jesuits, but had become bitterly hostile to them—an antagonism which was apparently reciprocated—and was actively anticlerical and in sympathy with the free-thinkers of the University. He acquired a high reputation in his profession, and the number and position of those who attended his lectures gave him no small influence. With his students as the first members, he founded an Order in 1776, first called the "Ordre des Perfectibilistes," but soon changed to the Order of the Illuminati. According to Robison, the Order was designed to abolish Christianity, overturn all civil government, and rule the world,—cloaking the most subversive doctrines under the expressed intention of freeing men's minds from the shackles of blind and absurd superstition, and bringing about a state of universal happiness. The Order was said to abjure Christianity and to refuse admission into the higher degrees to all who adhered to any of the three confessions. Sensual pleasures were restored to the rank they held in the Epicurean philosophy. Self-murder was justified on Stoical principles. Death was declared an eternal sleep; patriotism and loyalty were regarded as narrow-minded prejudices, incompatible with universal benevolence; liberty and equality were considered the inalienable rights of man, and accumulated property as an insurmountable obstacle to the happiness of any nation whose laws favoured it. The

Digitized by Google

principle that the end justifies the means, is supposed to have shaped all their policies. Anything was allowable if the Order could derive advantage from it, for the great object of the Order was held to be superior to every other consideration. The fact that much of this program is exactly duplicated in the French Revolution, is regarded by Mrs. Webster as among the conclusive proofs of the influence and activity in France of Weishaupt and his followers during all that period. The Feast of Reason she regards as the corollary of Weishaupt's teaching that "reason should be the only code of man". In the destruction of manufacturing towns, the burning of libraries, the guillotining of Lavoisier, and the feeling against scientists in general, she sees the direct outcome of Weishaupt's teachings against the "mercantile tribe," against the sciences, and against civilization in any form. She quotes Robison as stating that the "actual ceremonies which took place when women of easy morals were placed on the high altars, were modelled on Weishaupt's plan of an 'Eroterion' or festival in honour of the god of Love." And from the same source she draws the statement that the Jacobin Clubs all over France were organized by the revolutionary committees under the direct inspiration of the Bavarian Illuminati, who taught them their "method of doing business, of managing their correspondence, and of procuring and training pupils."

Everything about the Order was protected by the strictest secrecy. Not only was its existence concealed, but within its ranks no member was acquainted with anything beyond his own grade, and advancement came only to those who were tried and tested,—doctrines that were likely to revolt a man, being withheld until a safer time. The members adopted the names of noted persons of antiquity, Weishaupt, for instance, being known as Spartacus, a man who headed an insurrection of slaves in Rome in the time of Pompey. (Mrs. Webster, in substantiation of her theory that the Order is still active, sees significance in the fact that "in the very city where Spartacus-Weishaupt founded the first lodge of the Illuminati, the German World Revolutionists have adopted the name of Spartacists.") Weishaupt, who had long been interested in Freemasonry, but, according to one authority, could not afford (financially) to become a Mason, was finally admitted, together with Zwack, his closest associate in the Order, to the lodge in Munich. The advantage of combining the Order with Freemasonry soon became apparent to him, his plan being to have his first degree, the Minervals, identical with the Masons, and the higher degrees, secret. The explanation was given that those in the higher, secret degrees adhered to the Strict Observance, while the Munich Lodge did not. Dissension, just prior to this time, in two of the lodges, aided his plan, the dissenting members and Weishaupt's own adherents establishing a new lodge in 1779. As their numbers increased, the Order contrived to place its members in positions that would give them influence and power—either directly, as in the case of those who held prominent public offices, or indirectly, as in the case of tutors to youths of distinc-

Digitized by Google

tion. Membership grew rapidly, until there were branches in practically all the European countries and also in America.

It was not long before suspicion was aroused. The Elector of Bavaria became alarmed, and an investigation was begun. At first nothing could be discovered. The majority of Freemasons had no knowledge of the Illuminati. Some had heard of them, but knew nothing more. In 1783, before a court of inquiry, two professors admitted membership, gave considerable information—whether true or false—and as a result, the Order was suppressed and Weishaupt banished. The most extreme measures were taken against the members, trials being carried on with the severity, and with some of the methods, of the Inquisition. No papers of the Order were found, the members claiming that the latter were burned since they had no need of them after the Order was suppressed,—claiming also that whatever information transpired could not be correctly interpreted, since all their teachings were expressed symbolically or were intentionally disguised. Much of the correspondence between Spartacus (Weishaupt) and Cato (Zwack) was seized, from which the following extracts are indicative:

"The head of every family will be what Abraham was, the patriarch, the priest and the unlettered lord of his family, and Reason will be the code of laws to all mankind. . . . True, there may be some disturbance; but by and by the unequal will become equal." Elsewhere it is stated that family life, national life, all the ties and restraints which civilization imposes, must cease to exist.

"The allegory on which I aim to found the Higher Orders is the fire worship of the Magi. We must have some worship, and none is so apposite." Members in the earlier degrees were told that the religion contained in the Order was the "perfection of Christianity" and would be imparted in due time.

"Jesus of Nazareth, the Grand Master of our Order, appeared at a time when the world was in the utmost disorder. . . . He taught them [the people] the lessons of reason. To be more effective, he took in the aid of Religion—of opinions which were current—and, in a very clever manner, he combined his secret doctrines with the popular religion and with the customs which lay to his hand. . . . Never did any prophet lead men so easily and so securely along the road of liberty. He concealed the precious meaning and consequences of his doctrines, but fully disclosed them to a chosen few. . . . Let us only take Liberty and Equality as the great aim of his doctrines, and Morality as the way to attain it, and everything in the New Testament will be comprehensible; and Jesus will appear as the Redeemer of slaves."

Further portions of the correspondence which are made a great deal of, are plans for a Sisterhood connected with the Order, and a confession of immorality on the part of Weishaupt himself.

Much of the account as given by Robison exposes a deplorable state of affairs—deception, double dealing, espionage, coupled with a plan that

Digitized by Google

would reduce the civilized world to chaos if carried on without hindrance. "It is impossible," writes Mrs. Webster, "not to admire the ingenuity of the system by which each section of the community was to be made to believe that it would reap untold benefits from Illuminism—princes whose kingdoms were to be reft from them, priests and ministers whose religion was to be destroyed, merchants whose commerce was to be ruined, women who were to be reduced to the rank of squaws, peasants who were to be made to return to a state of savagery, were all, by means of dividing up the secrets of the Order into watertight compartments, to be persuaded that in Illuminism alone lay their prosperity or salvation." Mrs. Webster emphasizes the idea that Rousseau had merely paved the way for revolution, while Weishaupt constructed the actual machinery of revolution. She goes on to point out the supposed connection—with Robison again as source—between the Bavarian Illuminati and the leading men in France: Cagliostro was an Illuminatus, and he, in the well-known affair of the Queen's necklace, dealt the first blow at the monarchy; Mirabeau, sent to Berlin by the French government in 1786, became initiated into the highest mysteries of the Order, while later, on his return to France, he combined with Talleyrand in work for the Order which resulted in "illuminising" all the masonic lodges of France (this, with the aid of Bode and the Baron de Busche, two Illuminati called from Germany for the purpose); the Duc d'Orléans, who was a Grand Master of Freemasons and apparently an Illuminatus; the Jacobin Clubs, organized under the direct inspiration of the Bavarian Illuminati, finally supplanting and suppressing the masonic lodge in France; the Reign of Terror, in instigation, inspiration and method, regarded as the direct outcome of Illuminism.

To approach the subject from a somewhat different angle: a few years ago, Monsieur R. Le Forestier wrote a volume entitled *Les Illuminés de Bavière et la Franc-Maçonnerie Allemande,* in which he goes into the matter at great length. He claims that John Robison (who, by the way, is discredited by Madame Blavatsky as "an apostate Mason") was honest in his belief in his own statements, but that he knew little German, consequently misunderstood at many points, and drew wrong conclusions continually.

According to Le Forestier, the Order, recovering from the first blow, sprang up again as Reading Societies which were in their turn promptly suppressed. In Bavaria, measures were carried to an extreme (by some, the Jesuits are regarded as the chief instigators of this). Warnings were sent to all the governments of Europe, but comparatively little effect was produced, for the excessive zeal of the prosecution had reduced the whole matter to an absurdity. Weishaupt, who had fled first to Ratisbonne and then to Vienna, later entered the service of the Duke of Saxe Gotha, who was himself an Illuminatus. Here, under the name of Basilius, he undertook to reconstruct his work,—this time with the aid of Bode, so able an assistant that in 1787 the Order was thought to have been re-established. It died out completely, however, shortly after that date, and Weishaupt,

Digitized by Google

a completely broken man, spent the remainder of his life in the territory of the Duke of Saxe Gotha,—for years in constant dread of seizure by the Elector of Bavaria, and after the death of the latter, petitioning the Bavarian government for a pension which, in time, was granted.

In general, Le Forestier apparently considers Weishaupt himself guilty, in desire and intention, of the charges brought against him, but regards his followers as simply dupes, ignorant for the most part of the real aim of the Order. Such alarm as was felt concerning its revolutionary character, was due to the sensational stories of two men. In 1790, the *Journal politique de Hambourg,* edited by Schirach, published an article accusing the Illuminati of intriguing through the lodges of Paris and of Germany. It was declared that a club called Propaganda, masonic in character and directed by the Duc d'Orléans as Grand Master, met regularly in Paris, and that it had divided all Europe into sections to which revolutionary names had been given, and had assigned a representative to each section.

Shortly afterward, numerous accounts of the same nature appeared in the *Wiener Zeitschrift,* written by Leopold Aloys Hoffmann, a former professor in the University of Vienna, a Freemason, and at one time a strong adherent of the Illuminati. Turning on the latter, he became convinced that the spirit of Freemasonry was being changed through their influence, and with the object of combating their work, he started a Review. In the French Revolution, he saw full corroboration of his suspicions, and he wrote various articles denouncing the Order, declaring that its principles and its membership had spread throughout Europe, and warning governments and rulers of the menace. He declared that Herzberg, the minister of Frederic II, was one of the chiefs of the Order, and that he had placed the whole organization at the service of the Prussian state. In addition, he claimed to reveal a network of intrigue against Joseph II of Austria, accusing the Freemasons of instigating the Turkish war, fomenting strife in Hungary, attempting to give the regency in France to the Duc d'Orléans, and finally—as a means of striking at Joseph II—promoting the affair of the diamond necklace and the calumniating pamphlets against Marie Antoinette. One of the leading German Illuminati was declared to be secretary, in Paris, of a committee of the National Convention. The Bavarian Government was, of course, interested in these accounts, and in the list of Illuminati which it drew up were included the names of the Duc d'Orléans, Necker, La Fayette, Barnave, Brissot, La Rochefoucauld, Mirabeau, Payne and Fauchet.

At length, Hoffmann published an article accusing not only the Illuminati but, above all, the Protestants and the Protestant Universities. This did much to discredit all that he had previously written,—an effect which was considerably heightened when he proceeded to argue that the blind attachment which the French had always had for their king, was proof in itself that republicanism must have come from outside France;

Digitized by Google

that the events of the French Revolution were likewise sufficient proof of the influence of the doctrines of the Illuminati, especially as these doctrines were unknown in France before 1788 and were the property of the Illuminati as early as 1782. With these rather hysterical assertions, Hoffmann overshot the mark, and Le Forestier, scarcely taking the trouble to prove or disprove the various claims, regards them as discredited by their own extreme nature.

Placing certain statements of this historian side by side with those of Mrs. Webster, it is interesting to see the manner in which diametrically opposite conclusions may be drawn from the same fact. Perhaps the best example of this is in the case of Bode, who came from Germany, according to Mrs. Webster, at Mirabeau's request to aid in the illuminising of French Freemasonry. She says that he was alleged to have come for a meeting of the Philalèthes, an organization of Martinistes interested in occultism, alchemy, and theurgy, but she explains that, in reality, Mirabeau borrowed this name for the time being, as a ruse, in order to avert suspicion. And "at the lodge of the 'Amis Reunis,' where the members of the masonic lodges from all over France were congregated, the mysteries of Illuminism were unveiled by the two German emissaries [Bode and Baron de Busche], and the code of Weishaupt was formally placed on the table. The result of this was that by March, 1789, the 266 lodges controlled by the Grand Orient were all 'illuminised', and in the following month the Revolution broke out."

Le Forestier, as already stated, does not believe that there was any interchange of emissaries, and, in regard to Bode, writes that Bode made one trip to Paris connected with the organization of the Philalèthes (in this case regarded as the genuine organization), and arrived too late for the meeting. Yet several years afterward, his visit took on great importance in the eyes of the enemies of the Order,—for whom it sufficed to know that Bode was sent to Paris two years before the taking of the Bastille, to know, further, just what he was sent there for, and to deduce the information that he had enrolled the Duc d'Orléans and that the group then inaugurated was the father of the Jacobin Club. Similarly, Le Forestier explains away the importance of Cagliostro and Mirabeau. The former he considers a charlatan, without doubt connected with the Order, judging from his own testimony when on trial, but for a number of reasons which it is needless to go into here, not at all likely to have served as a go-between. As for Mirabeau, Illuminatus though he was, there is an equal number of reasons why it is improbable that he spread Weishaupt's doctrines.

Mrs. Webster, in her claim that Illuminism has spread to America, Scotland, Ireland, and through many European countries, and is showing its head in one event after another of the present day, denounces what she calls the deception of interested historians, Le Forestier among them, anxious to suppress the truth about the subsequent activities of the Order. "One cannot help wondering," she writes, "why it should be thought

Digitized by Google

worth while to devote large and expensive volumes to this view of the case. If Illuminism was of no importance to the world, why bother to write about it? If it really died in 1785—that is to say, at the time of its suppression in Bavaria—of what interest can its dry bones be to us today? Does not the idea inevitably suggest itself that these exonerations may be held necessary because—in France at least—illuminised Freemasonry has been recognised as a real and *living* danger?" Her theory is that the deception referred to is practised merely to allay suspicion, while under its protecting cover the Order is more actively working abroad than ever it was able to work in Bavaria.

Standing alone, or coupled with her book, Mrs. Webster's article is, for the most part, really convincing. But in the light of contrary accounts, neither point of view has conclusive proof. The same fact that fills one man with panic, and in consequence is obviously overemphasized, will perhaps, by another, be explained away entirely. What the real situation was and is, is an open question, and a question that takes on added interest when coupled with many of the events of the present day. One situation which would seem to have a possible bearing on the subject, was brought out in an article in the New York *Times* of February 24, 1918, with subsequent letters and comments. Here it is stated that the Caillaux element in French politics was aided by the influence of French Masons, and reference is made to the gigantic system of espionage organized some years ago by General André, then minister of war, with the aid of officials of the Grand Orient of France. The writer says: "There are in France, as in Italy, two bodies each claiming to be the representative of Freemasonry. There is, on the one hand, the body affiliated with the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, which was established in Paris, I believe, in 1804. This is so distinctly a religious body that many lodges will accept only professing Christians as members. But there is, besides, an older body, whose spy system I have touched on,—the body which, on September 13, 1877, erased from its rules the paragraph declaring that the existence of God and the immortality of the soul were the basis of Freemasonry; which, on September 10, 1878, expunged from its ritual the symbols of the Grand Architect of the Universe."

Various other recent incidents naturally suggest themselves as having possible significance, and yet one must take care not to see significance, or at least not to see *connection*, simply because of the juxtaposition of facts or events. This is an unfortunate characteristic of the Webster article, for the author writes: "Is it a mere coincidence that the first of May, the day on which Weishaupt founded Illuminism, was chosen at the instigation of the Spartacists, Liebknecht and Bebel, as 'Labour Day,' on which to celebrate the social revolution? Is it an accident that the dechristianization of Russia has been carried out on identically the same lines as the dechristianization of France, even to the detail of tying the Bible to the tail of an ass?" Merely to ask these questions is one thing, but to proceed to regard them as conclusive argu-

Digitized by Google

ment is a mistake—is a form of argument every school boy is warned against in his earliest acquaintance with rhetoric—and it takes the fine point off the author's conclusions in a number of cases.

To many of us any word of Madame Blavatsky's on this question would be of the greatest interest and significance. She has made quite clear her attitude regarding Cagliostro and his associates in the Work, and these statements, coupled with the historic accounts of Cagliostro's connection with the Illuminati, afford several possible clues. But that is a subject in itself. J. C.

(To be continued)

Faithful words are often not pleasant; pleasant words are often not faithful. Good men do not dispute; the ones who dispute are not good. The learned men are often not the wise men, nor the wise men, the learned. The wise man does not hoard, but ever working for others, he will the more exceedingly acquire. Having given to others freely, he himself will have in plenty.—TAO TEH KING.

The wise man lives in the world but he lives cautiously, dealing with the world cautiously. He universalizes his heart; the people give him their eyes and ears, but he treats them as his children.—TAO TEH KING.

Life is a going forth; death is a returning home.—TAO TEH KING.

Digitized by Google

IN THE HOUSE OF DEATH
KATHA UPANISHAD

TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT WITH AN INTERPRETATION

I.

Seeking for favour, verily, Vajashravasa made a sacrifice of all his possessions. He had a son, named Nachiketas. Him, being still a boy, faith entered as the cattle for the sacrifice were being led up. He thought:

These have drunk water, they have eaten grass, they have been milked of their milk, they are without strength. Joyless, verily, are those worlds; to them he goes, giving these.

He said to his father:

Then to whom wilt thou give me? said he.

A second and third time he asked him.

To Death I give thee! said he.

IF the essence of the Upanishads dwell in those parts of the complete documents which have the form of drama, then it may be said that, of all the dramatic dialogues in these ancient Books of Wisdom, this Upanishad is, in many ways, the finest and most beautiful.

It is also the most universal, embodying the most universal truths of life in the most universal symbolism.

The central symbol is this: The Father sends his Son into the realm of Death. After dwelling three days in the House of Death, the Son rises again and returns to his Father.

It needs no emphasis to make clear that the theme of this ancient Upanishad is the central theme of Christianity. But it is also of the deepest interest that the Western Avatar again and again uses one or another variation of the same symbolic story in the Parables of the Kingdom, which are the most characteristic part of his teaching.

Take, for example, the parable of the man who planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. After he had in vain sent servants to receive the fruit of the vineyard, having one son, well beloved, he sent him also, saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

Here, the Father sends the Son to the husbandmen, and the Son is put to death. And the context makes it quite clear that the Western Avatar is, in this parable, speaking of his own mission.

Digitized by Google

The first three Gospels record this parable. The fourth does not. Yet the fourth gospel conveys exactly the same thought, expressed directly and without parable:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

All four Gospels thus make it clear that the Father sending the Son, with the death of the Son, is, among other things, an accepted symbol of the mission of the Avatar; and that the Western Avatar thus used this symbol.

But he uses the symbol of the Father and the Son in another way, also, in what is, perhaps, the greatest and most beautiful of all the parables: the story of the Prodigal.

Here, it is not the Son of man, but man himself, who is symbolized; man himself, who goes to the place of penitence, and returns thence to his Father.

Using the phrase in one of the texts that bear the name of Shankaracharya, we may say that the Father is the supreme Self, Parama-atma, who sends the Son, the personal self, Jiva-atma, into the world. The personal self dwells there three days. And these three days represent "three times," past, present, future; for the personal self, entering the world, falls under the dominion of threefold time. Only when, overcoming the world, he reaches liberation, does he "pass beyond the three times," as another Upanishad puts it.

In one sense, then, the Son whom the Father sends into the world represents the human soul suffering the universal fate. In another sense, the Son is the Avatar.

But there is no contradiction, since the Avatar of set purpose subjects himself to the universal fate; he takes our nature upon him, and is in all points tempted like as we are, becoming subject to death, in order that he may show the way of resurrection. As the profoundly philosophical Epistle to the Hebrews puts it: In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour them that are tempted.

The whole of the second chapter of this Epistle sheds a flood of light on the purpose with which an Avatar incarnates, thus making himself subject to death; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death.

This last sentence might serve as a superscription for the Upanishad which we are considering. It represents the victory over death, gained through the teaching of Death.

The Avatar, the Master, subjects himself to the power of death; he takes upon himself the general fate of mankind, and lives a life which, at every point, shall be representative of that universal fate; all this, in order that he may show mankind the way to overcome the common fate, to gain the victory over death. He creates situation after situ-

Digitized by Google

ation, performs act after act, in order that, as Christ expressed it, the scripture might be fulfilled; in order that his life might be perfectly symbolic of the journey of the soul through death to liberation.

As has been said before in these comments, it would seem that, on its way toward liberation, the soul of the disciple passes through definite ceremonies, the frame for which is set by those who have already attained, those who have been spoken of as Masters; and that these ceremonies not only represent the upward journey of the soul, but also give the soul vital help and inspiration on that journey.

It would appear that this Upanishad is the dramatized record of such a ceremony of initiation; that it records not only the fate of Nachiketas, son of Vajashravasa, who descended into the House of Death, but also a ceremony actually passed through by disciples who, in such an initiation, die to the outer world and awake to the world of immortality.

And, curiously enough, there is still evidence of this character of the Upanishad as the record of a ceremony of initiation, in the Sanskrit text itself. For, toward the end of the first half, which completes the story of Nachiketas, there occur these words: "Arise ye! Awake ye! Having obtained your wishes, understand ye!"—all three verbs being in the plural imperative, and therefore obviously not addressed to Nachiketas alone; exactly the words that might be expected to close a ceremony of initiation.

This, then, is an outline of the symbolism of the whole Upanishad. It represents the journey of the soul, descending into the House of Death, the world of our mortality; dwelling there three days, which represent the "three times," threefold time, perceived as past, present and future; and finally rising again from the House of Death, and returning to the Father. And at the same time this symbolism represents the initiation of a disciple, which initiation is a representation and summing up of the soul's journey to its divine consummation.

There is one point of symbolism still to be considered in the passage translated: namely, the sacrifice of cattle, which preceded the sacrifice of the Son. And it happens that we can once more find the clue of the symbol in the deeply mystical Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, and especially in the tenth chapter:

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of those things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? . . . For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. . . . Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may

Digitized by Google

establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all . . ."

Here, we have exactly the same sequence as in the Upanishad: first the sacrifice of cattle, an imperfect and ineffectual sacrifice; then the sacrifice of the Son, made once for all.

What then is the significance of this sacrifice of cattle? We may find the clue in the Upanishad itself, in the verse which may be translated thus:

"Those of old have called the powers of sense the horses, and the objects of these powers the pastures, or the roadways."

The cattle, then, are the bodily senses, the natural powers of perception and action, while the things which they perceive, the things upon which they act, are the pastures in which the cattle graze, or the roads on which the horses travel.

The sacrifice of cattle symbolically represents a stern asceticism which restrains the natural senses and powers, holding them back from objects of sense; yet without the full sacrifice of self, without the true subjection of the heart to the divine law, expressed in the words: "I come to do thy will." For the motive of this asceticism may well be spiritual ambition, the desire that oneself may excel, that power may be gained for oneself; an ambition full of vanity and evil.

Therefore there is but one perfect and effectual sacrifice: the sacrifice of the personal will to the divine Will, the offering of the human heart to the supreme Heart, the sacrifice of the Son to the Father.

As Nachiketas says, the imperfect sacrifice of asceticism can gain only joyless worlds; as Paul says, it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Sin lies in the will, and can be taken away only by complete obedience to the divine Will, through the absolute offering up of all the wills of self.

So we come back to the dramatic story of the son of Vajashravasa. Nachiketas has been sacrificed, sent by his father to the House of Death. Standing on the way of death, that all mortals tread, he thus considers:

Of many, I go the first; of many, I go the midmost. What is this to be done of Yama, which through me he will today accomplish?

Look after those who have gone before; look toward those who are coming; as it was with those, so it is with these. As grain a mortal ripens; as grain he rises again in birth.

Nachiketas is standing on the road of death. Many are following him; of these he is the first. But he sees also that many have already gone before him; therefore he stands in the midst of a perpetual stream of pilgrims.

The symbol of seed corn sown in the ground, and there losing its form and character, yet through that very change giving birth to new life, would seem to be as old as ancient Egypt, in the days of Osiris. It

Digitized by Google

is used here, as it is used in the New Testament, as the symbol of resurrection from among the dead. This is the spiritual resurrection, the birth of the spiritual man, the immortal.

Nachiketas goes forward to the door of the House of Death, to seek admission, and speaks thus:

As Vaishvanara, a sacred guest approaches dwellings. Therefore they give him this greeting of peace: Bring water, oh Son of the Sun!

Hope and expectation, friendship and pleasant words, sacrifice and good deeds, sons and cattle, this destroys, of the man of little wisdom in whose house a sacred guest dwells without eating.

The meaning of Vaishvanara, a title of Agni, god of Fire, was discussed in a former comment. There is the one universal, divine Fire, which, in heaven, appears as the sun; in the mid-world, appears as lightning; on the earth, appears as fire on the altar. But the human body is also the altar on which this fire burns. This fire is the breath of life which is common to all men; common, indeed, to all living beings upon the earth, animals and plants as well as men. The human being, therefore, as the abode of this sacred fire, is sacred, and must be received as representative of the god. When the guest comes to the door, god Agni comes to the door. In him, the guest must be greeted.

And here there is a touch of humour in the tradition. The guest, representative of the Fire-god, must be greeted with an offering of water, lest the Fire-god burn up the dwelling. The universal presence of this obligation throughout the East is testified to, by a sentence from another sacred book: "I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet."

Water at least must be offered to the guest; and failure to make this offering, because it is a slight offered to the divinity in the guest, burns up the hope and expectation, the friendship and pleasant words, the merit earned by sacrifice, and even the sons and cattle of the inhospitable man who spurns the guest. Friendly words toward him cease, because even the poorest may greet the stranger with friendly words, and he has failed to do this.

Nachiketas, kept waiting three days and nights outside the door of Yama, utters this reproach against Death's inhospitality. Or, as an Indian commentary suggests, the reminder comes from Yama's wife, who recalls to him the duties of hospitality. The text itself gives no indication as to who is the speaker; but it seems more fitting to assign the words to Nachiketas himself.

We come now to Yama, Lord of death, who is addressed here as Death, and also as Son of the Sun. Concerning this mysterious personage, there are many traditions in the ancient books of India, from which, perhaps, we may be able to elicit a consistent meaning.

Digitized by Google

Yama, with his twin sister Yami, are children of Vivasvat, the Sun. They thus represent the Solar Pitris, the conscious and intelligent souls of mankind. They are represented as twins, perhaps to indicate the early races which were two-sexed, before the separation of the sexes. And the tradition that Yama was wedded to his twin sister Yami, no doubt refers to the period after the separation of the sexes, when sex union began; the epoch of the later Third Race. The fact that Yama is also called Lord of the South may likewise refer to this Third Race, which had its chief development on the southern continent, as the Second Race seems to have had its chief development on the northern continent.

Yama was also the first, according to tradition, who died a physical death; another reference to the same period of the later Third Race. When the time for death came, Yama, as king of the men of that time, volunteered to be the first to taste of death, to descend into the world of darkness. Therefore Yama became Lord of the House of Death, and Judge of the dead. According to their deeds, they were sent to one or another of the twenty-one provinces of Yama; and, when they had received the reward of good works, or the punishment of evil works, they were born again.

This tradition will explain the various names of Yama: Son of the Sun, Lord of Death, Lord of Judgment. As Son of the Sun, representative of the spiritual nature in man, Yama is also the great Initiator, who reveals to men their spiritual powers. Therefore, he is both the host of Nachiketas, as Lord of the realm of Death, and his Initiator, as Son of the Sun, which here, as so often, is the symbol of the Logos, the Sun of Righteousness.

It would be easy to draw parallels with the traditions of Egypt, where Ra is the Sun, while Amen-Ra, the hidden Sun, the sun after sunset, is the Lord of the realm of Death. So also Osiris, the great sacrificial victim, is Lord of the realm of Death and Judge of the dead, and is, at the same time, Lord of the hidden wisdom, Lord of Initiation.

After the passage of three nights, which, as has been shown, stand for the "three times," past, present, future, the forms taken by Eternity in this our place of pilgrimage, Yama, at last greeting his guest, speaks thus to Nachiketas:

Because thou hast dwelt three nights in my house without eating, a sacred guest, worthy of reverence—reverence to thee, holy one, and may it be well with me—therefore, in return do thou choose three wishes.

Nachiketas answers:

That the descendant of Gotama, my father, may be of quiet heart, well-minded, without resentment towards me, O Death, when I am sent forth by Thee; that he may address me gladly—this I choose as the first wish of my three!

Yama replies:

Digitized by Google

As before, Uddalaka Aruni's son will be well-disposed toward thee through my grace. Happily by night he will sleep with resentment gone, having beheld thee released from the mouth of Death.

There are different shades of meaning in this first wish, according to the different layers of the allegorical story. First, taking the story as a simple narrative of the father, Vajashravasa, who, because of his son's insistence, was forced to sacrifice him to Death, there is the simple wish that that father should be without resentment toward his son, without sorrow; that he should receive his son with all his former love. Then there is the deeper meaning, where the Son is a symbol of the soul which has descended into the world of death; that the Father should once more receive this Son, taking him to himself with love as of old. This is the meaning indicated in the parable of the Prodigal. And there is a third meaning, having to do with the disciple, the candidate for initiation. The father here represents the whole past Karma of the disciple; the web of limitations which he has imposed upon himself by his past acts and faults. After his initiation, a part of his task is, to conquer these limitations, to bring order out of this web of confusion, to bring reconciliation between the past and the new future which is illumined by the light of initiation.

The name of Uddalaka Aruni deserves comment. In a passage in the Chhandogya Upanishad, it is said that: "This sacred teaching Brahma declared to Prajapati, Prajapati to Manu, Manu to his offspring. This sacred truth was declared by his father to his eldest son, Uddalaka Aruni." Shankaracharya, or the disciple who writes in his name, thus interprets this: "Brahma Hiranyagarbha declared it to Prajapati Viraj; he to Manu; and Manu declared it to Ikshvaku and the others."

We may compare with this the passage at the beginning of the fourth book of the Bhagavad Gita. "This everlasting teaching of Union I declared to the Solar Lord; the Solar Lord declared it to Manu; Manu revealed it to Ikshvaku. Thus handed down by spiritual succession, the Rajanya sages received this revelation."

We are concerned here with the succession of the Divine Hierarchy, guardians of the greater Mysteries and revealers of the great Initiation. Having its heart and origin in the Logos, it is imparted to the Regent of the Solar Pitris, who are the bearers of the souls of men; the Solar Lord reveals it to the humanity of our own race, to whom it comes through the line of the Solar Kings, at the head of which traditionally stands Ikshvaku. And from the Solar Kings come the Upanishads, as they themselves abundantly testify.

Therefore the name, son of Uddalaka Aruni, given to the father of Nachiketas, would appear to point directly to the line of transmission of the greater Mysteries, and clearly to indicate that this story is a document of the greater Mysteries: the thought with which the present interpretation is undertaken.

C. J.

Digitized by Google

"WHY DO I FAIL?"

IF you know a man who thoroughly believes that he is a really perfect husband, you have the misfortune to know an unmitigated cad. If you know a man convinced that he is letter-perfect in the knowledge and in the conduct of his business, his art, or his profession, you know him now, or you will know him soon, as a recognized failure—in addition to his being already an unalloyed ass. If you think that you know of a saint or a mystic, who did not feel that he or she was a failure, you have been wasting your time upon one who is an impostor—according to all rules and to all teachings.

Yet thousands of wives know that there are good husbands, who do make their homes happy. Thousands of successful men—in business, in the arts and in the professions—attest that consciousness of imperfection is not incompatible with achievement. The lives of the great saints and the great mystics cry aloud that there is power in humility and its consciousness of self-helplessness; indeed, that from humility alone does power spring.

Hence, consciousness of imperfection is not incompatible with progress, or even with a degree of success. The husband who does fail is the one who quits trying to be better than he knows he is. The man in the world, who refuses to strive, just because he does not attain to his ideals, does fail. The aspirant who does not feel the "fear of God," as he measures his own life, has yet to take the first step on the Path. What the world calls success in any direction seems to rest upon consciousness of imperfection on the part of the one acclaimed successful.

The first rudimentary animal that felt fear for itself, in the face of a superior force, perhaps attained the first step in self-consciousness. True, it was only reacting to what biologists call "the first law"—that of self-preservation. Whether it acted from instinct, or from initiative, is immaterial. It acted in itself, as itself, and for itself.

The first rudimentary animal that fought for its own mate, offspring or ally—parental or tribal—took the first step in consideration of others. It had enlarged its self-consciousness to include another. It had taken the first step towards universal brotherhood. Biologists would say it had followed their "second law"—that of the preservation of the species.

It is interesting—perhaps it may be suggestive and helpful—to note that the rudimentary species that stressed the first law, and slighted the second law, became extinct. Only the species that followed and obeyed both laws, survived. If we rest inactive in the consciousness of failure, perhaps there is nothing immortal in us—we fail utterly. If we use the fear that the consequences of our failures will fall upon others, perhaps the second law of biology will prove as operative today, as it

Digitized by Google

has in the past, and our "species" will survive—a first step taken towards immortality. Whom do we hurt when we fail?

However slightly we touch it, however much of a load or drag upon it we may be, yet we know that we are part and parcel of the great Theosophical Movement. We sense its power: yet we see that even it seems to fail—perhaps because of us. Nevertheless it continues—wave after wave. Again, and again, and yet again, the impulse is received by the world. The world rouses; tries; fails. Then again the impulse is given. Charlemagne's sons disrupted his kingdom, set back France, found no successors for the Paladins—but France lived. Ignatius gave himself as the spear-head. Neglected, as he lay dying, his cold corpse was glorified—and the Jesuits were already off the track. Yet Christ did not give up the fight. To St. Margaret Mary was soon revealed the sacred heart—to be received by the world with sleepy apathy. Incident after incident may be enumerated. They will prove repeated failures. This is true. Also is it true that they will also prove the unflagging will and inflexible determination that failure upon failure shall not result in giving-up, in quitting, in surrender to odds, however great they may be. The Master himself remains undismayed; and fighting. The work of Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge has not stopped—the T. S. still functions after their death.

Perhaps there is danger in this thought that failure has been recurrent. It is dangerous if it be allowed to destroy will. How dangerous it is the recent war has already shown, and, alas, may have yet to show. France failed to hold back the Germans, but France fought on. Belgium, England, Serbia, Italy and other Allies failed in turn. But each fought on. America failed at first even to awake. Awakened at last, America began to fight. The Germans felt their own failure in France's will to fight on. The Germans stopped fighting. They offered surrender. The Allies refused to carry-on to complete and uncompromising victory. They themselves surrendered in accepting the proffered German peace. The people of the Allies cried aloud that war is failure. The demand became that war be stopped, not that victory be won. The world may yet pay a fearful price for accepting the pacifist dictum that war is the worst of evils; that war in itself is the final failure. Are we, who are in the Movement, to come, also, to regard continued necessity for combat as failure? Is it not opportunity?

So much for some of the universal aspects of our problem. How about the particular—where it affects you and me? I echo your plaint, "Oh! why do I fail?" If I did not recognize that I have failed I would not be—for I could not be—with you in the great Movement. Together do we seek guides, adjusters, teachers, and the Path. We do not belong here, if we do not see ourselves in each other—and thus find the truth about ourselves. How does *Light on the Path* put it?——

"9. Regard earnestly all the life that surrounds you.

Digitized by Google

10. Learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men.

11. Regard most earnestly your own heart."

And, in the "Note" to "10," we shall find:

"From an absolutely impersonal point of view, otherwise your sight is coloured. Therefore impersonality must first be understood.

"Intelligence is impartial: no man is your enemy: no man is your friend. All alike are your teachers. Your enemy becomes a mystery that must be solved, even though it take ages: for man must be understood. Your friend becomes a part of yourself, an extension of yourself, a riddle hard to read. Only one thing is more difficult to know—your own heart. Not until the bonds of personality are loosed can that profound mystery of self begin to be seen. Not till you stand aside from it will it in any way reveal itself to your understanding. Then, and not till then, can you grasp and guide it. Then, and not till then, can you use all its powers, and devote them to a worthy service."

Is not the first step, in knowledge of our own hearts, that first step of the rudimentary animal—fear in the face of a superior force? We simply cannot beat God, or the Absolute, or Karma, or the Divine Law. [What difference does it make by what name we call "That"? How often men go astray through words—mere trifling masks of basic ideas. Let us always try to get hold of what is within—not grab at the flimsy trappings.] God does know what is best for us. He does know what is best for each of us. Let us make the best of what He gives us—here and now; just as we are; and—especially—just exactly as we are circumstanced—call it circumscribed, if you like. Our personal opinions will not move God. He has given us what He knows is best for us, and for each of us.

If we linger too long in the Valley of the Shadow of Death (Failure), surely we shall stay there. "Fear is a force to be used." It is not a force to be allowed to master us, as it mastered the Germans, for a time, and now threatens to master the democracies of the world. Remember that the species that used fear only for self-preservation, ultimately became extinct. The only immortality lies in the power of the fear of hurting others. Hence Socialism will not survive. Perhaps we had better swallow some painful truths about ourselves, making them pith and fibre of our substance.

Truth (or food) first: In one sense, it is utterly unimportant whether our personalities fail or not. It is, indeed, quite likely that they ought not to survive. The Universe managed, somehow, to exist a year or two, at the least, before our personalities appeared upon the scene. It is a fair assumption that it will so continue, when they are gone. Yet, while our personalities are so utterly unimportant, the use or misuse we make of them may be vitally important to others. According to the

Digitized by Google

teachings of science and religion alike, we have energy entrusted to us to expend. How do we use this? There is nothing alone in the universe. The law of the correlation and conservation of energy is universal. How does what we do or fail to do affect others?

Truth (or food) second, is that we are really and truly not so extraordinary as we like to think ourselves. We are even ordinary. Neither our sins nor our difficulties are brand-new. Only our dates are Twentieth Century. Have you ever read that letter of the Assyrian schoolboy, cut on a clay tablet thousands of years ago, in which he threatens to stamp and "holler," if his father does not grant his request? You and I are not the first fathers to fail. We shall not be the last. Yet this will not excuse us, if we should quit because we may not attain to our ideal of fatherhood. Our very pet sins, our own special failures, were undoubtedly vulgar in the days of the Lemurians and the Atlanteans. Let you and me cease glorying in our uniqueness. Let us stop considering our sins to be the first to be irremediable. Let us remember that the Christ cured "incurable" lepers—even though only one of the ten thanked him! Sin is as universal as God—and far more commonplace.

Why do we fail? Perhaps if we study great failures we may find pitfalls to avoid and barriers to be surmounted. We are never alone in the universe. We merely express within ourselves the workings of the Law. Therefore, we may expect to find the same experience on the universal and on the particular planes. What hint is there in the T. S.—the current, organized expression of the great and unceasing effort of the powers-that-be to lead the children of men into that land of promise, sought for through all the ages, in all climes, by all peoples? It would be an incompetent guide that warned not of dangers. Of what dangers was the T. S. given warning? Were the warnings heeded?

One of the greatest of the guides of the T. S. is only known to most of us by tradition, and intuition. Nevertheless many of us dare to feel that we owe him much and love him dearly, all unseen by us though he has been, despite the love he has poured out for us. He is the Master designated "the Master K. H.," in the early Theosophical literature of the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century. How early he began his guidance and ministrations, it would take an older member to say. His first intervention is chronicled, for some of us, in those truly marvellous letters, to be found in *The Occult World*. It was, apparently, in 1881, late in the first heptad of the Society, that he wrote:

> "You seek all this, and yet, as you say yourself, hitherto you have not found sufficient reasons to even give up your modes of life, directly hostile to such modes of communication. This is hardly reasonable. He who would lift up high the banner of mysticism and proclaim its reign near at hand must give the example to others. He must be the first to change his modes of life, and, regarding the study of the occult mysteries as the upper step in the ladder of

Digitized by Google

knowledge, must loudly proclaim it such, despite exact science and the opposition of society. 'The kingdom of Heaven is obtained by force,' say the Christian mystics. It is but with armed hand, and ready to either conquer or perish, that the modern mystic can hope to achieve his object."

It will pay us to read those words with care. We should find guidance. We may find explanation of our own failures. Let us be quite honest with ourselves—have you and I yet been ready even "to give up your (our) modes of life"? What are we to give up? What nonsense! Is there a single number of The QUARTERLY that has not told us? Have you and I been "the first to change his (our) modes of life"? Sobbing with self-pity we may say that we have—but have we? Let us take that "absolutely impersonal point of view," laid down in *Light on the Path:* how much have we given up that we, or our lower natures, wanted to retain? I should "hate awfully" to be compelled by a recording angel to express in terms of percentage what I "have found sufficient reasons" to give up of my modes of life.

At the beginning, I, for one, most cheerily skipped over the "hard places." I saw only the "loudly proclaim it." I liked that. Without obeying the order to change, without heeding the hint in that use of the word "upper," I followed my personal inclinations. Have you ever seen a very little child try to run away from its nurse, before it had really learned to toddle alone? Have you ever seen it smash on the pavement and get all cut and bruised? Yet what would you have thought of the child, or of its nurse, or of its parents, if it had then and there renounced all effort to learn to walk—because it had failed to run and had been hurt? I failed then. I fail daily. Should I quit? Must I not learn to walk, and even to run, despite my spills and bruises? And shall I not keep getting spilled and bruised until I learn to walk? As a father I kept my children at the task. I wonder if I know more than God?

What is it, that the Master K. H. wishes us to conquer? Go through those letters, see if I presume unduly, when I say that the Master meant our lower natures—each to himself a menace, and, in even an unknown union with other lower natures, becoming the peril of the soul of the world. The Master speaks frankly, while retaining the divine courtesy of the royal gentlemen of the inner world. Note what he says, further along in that same letter, about motives; closing with that never to be forgotten sentence:

> "Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness, if, in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of a desire for self-benefit, or a tendency to do injustice, even where these exist unconsciously to himself."

Do not we, you and I, think that it would be easier for us, if only

Digitized by Google

we could get rid of this ever-lasting necessity for fighting? Do we ever ask if such a peace would be working injustice to the Master's cause?

I have spoken of the Master K. H.'s outstanding courtesy. Let us use a possible hint in his reference to "Christian mystics," at a time when many of the early and temporary members of the T. S. seem to have conceived the erroneous idea that it was meant to be a missionary society for the spread of dogmatic Buddhism. We may find a recognition of the law that, in the objective world of differentiation:

"Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth."

The Master K. H. and the Master Christ, being in the world of union, as well as working in the world of men, must "stand face to face" (and how they must love each other!). We have not attained such meeting. Yet we may learn from the East and the Eastern Master. That is an advantage we have in the T. S. We are urged to seek help everywhere. Still, for us, do space and time rule. Earth and sky have not yet met for us. So it is, possibly, that, all through the Master K. H.'s writings, one seems to find an urging to Westerners to seek in the West for direction—with the illumination of the East, but never the substitution of the East. Were substitution advisable for us, you and I might well be wearing dusky skins and snowy turbans. Let us use the truth of the East to find truth in the West. Likewise: let us take our schooling just where and as we are—even if it seem to us to be a school of war. Do we not follow a fighting Master? What is the truth that we may find in the West, that will help us to face and overthrow our failures?

Do not stop to get out Bible and *Book of Common Prayer*—try thinking it out from what we have in our hearts of their lore and law. What is the great practical method of the Master Christ, as he taught it to his children? There! He called us "his children." Instinctively, almost automatically, have we not expressed the crux of his preliminary training? I do not mean his teaching, summed up for us in his "two great commandments," and in his Passion. Let us limit ourselves to the essence of the practice he enjoined. Is not the first step—and, indeed, in a very real sense, at once the final (irrevocable) step—to be found in——

> "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.
>
> "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

Digitized by Google

Shades of the suffering mothers, who have thought of their innocent but unbaptised babes as eternally damned, how we hard-minded people of the West have distorted those key-words! How it must grieve the heart of a most tender, as well as a most gallant Great One, that he, the lover of children, should be deemed to have damned them, untried and untested. We do not teach the calculus and Sanscrit in the primary grades. Of course, as seems obvious, little children should be taught and guided in religion, as they are today in "commercial geography" and "Americanization"—*sans* any "taint" of religion, alas—and as they ought to be, but are not being, taught in courtesy and manners. Nevertheless, while this famous teaching of the Christ does apply to children, yet we, who pretend to study Theosophy, should be the first to recall that, as in the case of all great truths, as with all great Laws, these teachings of the Master must cut through all strata. Obviously they are not to be limited to any one plane. Obviously they are to be used on each and every plane—even that altitudinous one, as we view it, that we are upon.

Therefore we, too, we "grown-ups," as we call ourselves, should recognize that we are told that we must approach the kingdom of God as "little children." There is nothing new in this statement. We have heard it, we have read it, we have said it, and each over and over again, ever since our earliest childhood. We are, to be honest, all but bored by it. You and I say, impatiently, "I know all that, but what I want to know is—why do I, a grown man, with strength and will and powers and ability, fail? Please stick to my problem." Do we "know all that"? It is true that we have said it with our lips, but have we shown it forth in our lives? Have we acted accordingly? Have you? I have not. But we must, if we would answer that call through eternity—"Follow me."

Just how are we to approach the kingdom of God as "little children"? But, first, why do we wish to approach it? If we are honest with ourselves, we shall probably admit that we find a lack of clear cut apperception in our brains regarding this question. If we are equally honest, shall we not find that we have an instinctive, hardly formulated, yet none the less real, desire to reach a higher being, a helper, a "God the Father and Saviour and Inspirer"? Someone akin to us, yet infinitely higher? Perhaps, "the Higher Self" of the Eastern teachings? Do we not want to reach Him—rather than to achieve a state? We long to find the King, not merely to enter his kingdom. I believe this to be true of all of us. I believe that this quest is the keynote of all helpful teachings. I believe that if we really try to think, we shall find it to be true of you and of me—however diaphanous or amorphous it may seem to be—now.

May we not find here that "essential point of contact" that we must have, if we are *"to sell ourselves,"*—the idea that we, even you and I, must actually become as little children, if we are to change that negative "Why do I fail?" into the positive "What must I do, to do better?"

Digitized by Google

Suppose we use our eyes to look about us. Surely, if we are to follow this practice or process on this plane, we shall find familiar correspondences, or analogies, or at least hints, around us? Do we know fathers and mothers who love their children and are loved in turn by them? We, each of us, must have someone or something that we know right well that we do love. Let us, then, begin our research by conceding that this higher being, whom we do seek to reach, has powers at least equal to the highest human powers of which we know. What is the attitude of the right human parent towards his little child? What is the attitude of the right little child towards his human parent? Is it not important, however, to make a seeming digression at this point, to see if there may not be deep meaning for us, in the Master's use of that adjective "little"? A child's point of view is very different from that of a "little child." Self-assertion has already become active. There are attempts to use a reason that is inevitably and inescapably limited. In short, there is a purity, a simplicity, and an essential sweetness about a little child, lacking in an older child. New and attractive qualities may develop. There remains a difference which it seems important that we keep in mind in our study.

Before, however, we undertake to find out how we are to behave as "little children," would it not be well to determine if we are really and honestly ready to be considered as "little children"? You and I take pride in our knowledge, our experience, our training, our strength, and even in our achievements! We are not children in body. Far from it—would that I were! We know that we are full-grown personalities. Why then undertake to "make believe"? Did not St. Paul say something about his having "put away childish things"? Could anything be more "childish" than for you and for me to seek to re-become little children? This seems to be an almost unavoidable stage of doubt,—or a commonplace temptation of the Devil. Like other stages, it has to be passed out of and left below. Like all temptations, it is only a desire to let go, which may be overcome by hanging on. It is neither a unique doubt nor a new temptation.

Where may we find an analogy in ordinary life that may show us what we are to do, to become men and no longer to be self-recognized failures? Something over twenty millions of men, throughout the world, have just passed through army training. Shall we not find help in their experience, apparently needed under the Karma of our own day?

The Colonel of an American militia regiment, in the days before the war, knew himself to be a good deal of a person—just as you and I feel now. Despite this self-knowledge, when the day for battle came, he found himself as helpless as a child. Like unto a child, if he were patriotically wise and unconceited, he had to learn his first lessons. Even then, compared to Marshal Foch, for instance, he was, relatively, as utterly unimportant as a little child. To the Generalissimo the care and conduct of a single regiment was a little child's task. It must be done

Digitized by Google

aright, or confusion and possible injury might result. But so it is with a little child's assigned task.

Step down the scale in rank to a regular subaltern, even, and measure his importance on the battle line with that of a Pétain, or a Haig, or a Pershing. Is not a little child, a very little child, of more relative importance in a household? Of course, it is true that failure in a subaltern may bring on a disaster. So may a very little child's wrong act. Step down again to a veteran non-commissioned officer, and, then again, below him, to a private—how would he be appraised in terms of a Field Marshal? What small enough unit or microscopic percentage could you find to express a raw recruit?

Dare you and I lay claim to rank in the Army of the Lord? If we do, must it not be militia, tinsel, peace-time-and-pompous-parading rank, or do we call ourselves tried veterans? You and I know the answer. The very way in which we face our failures shows that we are untrained under fire. We are the rawest of raw recruits—undisciplined, unreliable, panic-infected, despite all our swagger and braggadocio. We are ripe grumblers and, even, ready whimperers, when we think that the supplies are inadequate, or when we have to sleep out of comfortable barracks. We are not fit for the Front and its dangers and hardships—and glory.

Are you and I not about ready to admit that our "positive rank" towards a Master and his disciples—his "friends," who do "whatsoever" is commanded them—is such in fact that it will be most rapid, and certainly undeserved, promotion, if we dare to consider that we have already reached to the state of being his littlest children? We know that we have not: let us grant, nevertheless, that by reason of our connection with the Theosophical Movement, we are somehow, by grace and by miracle, a link, if the very lowest, in a *guruparampara* chain, reaching up through all the degrees of discipleship to our Master and the Great Lodge.

Shall we not agree now to return to the relations between parent and little child, in order that we may at last learn to fight and so to cease, once and forever, to act like raw conscripts? What is the first quality that a parent seeks for in a little child? Is it not love? Those of us who have had children will recall that we sought eagerly for the first recognition of love towards us. An unloving child is most unlovely, almost monstrous. If we are to concede to the Master whom we seek, qualities only equal to the best human qualities, which we admit we have not attained for ourselves, may we not expect him to be desirous, equally desirous with us, that he be loved? Like unto ourselves, would he not wish this, not for his own sake, but to prove that his child is not unloving, unlovely and monstrous?

Perhaps this is the first test—how much do we love the Master? Not merely instinctively, but in expression and manifestation, resulting from our memory, understanding and will? What have you and I done

Digitized by Google

today—or given up doing—consciously and deliberately to express and manifest our love for him? Have we even done this in thought, to say nothing of deed? What parent has not cherished crudities that were the work of little hands to please "Papa" or "Mamma"? Do we not recall the glowing pride and even thankfulness we felt when a little one said that he had done or had not done something for our sake? Great Heavens, is the Master less than you or I? May we not give him the pleasure that we had? Shall we not give it to him today—and keep on giving it to him? We should not be happy if our child stopped loving us. This would not be selfish in us, either, for it would prove that our child was becoming spoilt. Is a Master less loving?

Next to loving, what marked good trait do we find in the little child—the child that the Master told us to imitate and emulate? Is it not faith? Does not the little child, the right little child, regard its parents as the wisest, the biggest, the strongest, yes, and the richest "in all the world"? My own father was a man of small income in fact, yet I still recall, down the corridor of nearly half a century, my own simple faith that he could have bought me anything and everything, if he had thought it best for me. It was the limiting power of his judgment that I then recognized, not the limits of his means—that recognition came later and "is another story". Is there any limit to the Master's means, save those we determine for ourselves, under our right to choose?

Have you and I real faith in the Master? How about my attitude towards "that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me?" How about yours, regarding your own lot in life?

This seems to shade into trust. Who does not recall, across the years, the joy that was ours, when our own little ones trusted us? It may have been when a little son took his first free steps for me, when he refused to trust his nurse, devoted though she was. Mayhap you will recall when your little girl unwhimperingly held your hand while the doctor set her broken arm. Or perhaps you remember when your boy's life was saved, that evening the beach house was burned, because the tiny little fellow crept through the narrow window and down the fragile trellis, because his father told him what to do? Only last year my younger son confessed that the lancing of a boil was less painful to him when he could hold my hand. Have you and I equal trust in the Master? I, for one, trust my own "loving wisdom" in training and guiding my sons, just because they are allotted to me—am I really greater, wiser, more loving than the Master to whom we have been allotted, or by whom we have been called?

Is this seemingly incomprehensible outer failure of mine injustice, or is it, somehow, just the discipline that I need? Are the lines of work that you or I happen to be engaged in, the worst things for us, as we sometimes seem to assume, or are our "studies", so to speak, being directed and differentiated according to our immediate and individual needs, as I direct and differentiate those of my sons for them?

Digitized by Google

By the way, is it not possible that our very attitude towards our duties, our difficulties, our "problems," proves that we do already function, rather perfectly, as little children? Do we not see bugaboos and ogres, conjure up mountains, and create all manner of horrors before us, just like little children going through dark woods at night? And have we not even less warrant so to act than they? All of which should remind us of those twinly-paged "gateposts" in the first volume of *Fragments:*

> "Duty is not an ogre, but an angel. How few understand this. Most confuse it as they do conscience."
>
> "Sorrows, crosses, these are our opportunities, could we but see it so. But he is far along who does so see it. He has attained who fully realizes it."

As I have endeavored to study my own childhood, my own parenthood, and my own children and their associates, for light on this problem of how a grown man or woman may approach the Master and his Kingdom as a little child, I seem to find a quality required that is all but forgotten in our day, and one too little used in our own efforts at discipleship. I mean a "child's obedience." Need I dwell on its nature —unquestioning, unreasoning, immediate, sweet-tempered, and aspiring ever towards a desired perfection? Is a child ever genuinely attractive, and a cause for pride in its parent, who is not obedient? Is it really happy? Do we care to live with a spoilt child? What hidden wisdom and frank judgment of the parenthood there is in that very phrase. Has a disobedient child any certainty of future, if it maintain its attitude?

How obedient are you and I to what we have been taught and to what we know? We expect of a child, even a little child, a great deal of recollection. "I forgot" was not accepted in my own childhood, nor should it be by any really loving parent today, as an excuse for disobedience. I wonder if our own chronic forgetfulness, our own lack of recollection, is less excusable? I also wonder if it is handled with less than our own human loving firmness?

How would that same standard apply in regard to our daily duties? When I gave a little son a task, what attitude on his part did I hope for? What attitude did I insist upon? Was I satisfied, for his own sake, with a sulky, angry, reluctant and essentially cowardly attitude? I call an attitude cowardly that means obedience to circumstances instead of by will. Thus was I trained by a most wise and loving mother, who called and treated half-hearted or tardy obedience as worse than open disobedience, because it was disobedience in heart and spirit, plus cowardice. Was I satisfied with half-hearted, inattentive efforts by my little sons?

"Why do I fail?" Is it not indeed, because I have not been as a little child? Have I not thought I was "a great, big man", "entirely

Digitized by Google

different from any one else in the whole, wide world". Have I not even thought, figuratively, "I know more than my Daddy"? These are crude statements; rude utterances from even a little child; but dare I deny that I have, in all essentials, paralleled them?

How do parents—wise, human parents—use direction in sending children out into their own little world? When our own little ones were to meet other little ones, what did we expect? What line of conduct did we teach? What standards did we insist upon, under penalty of punishment for transgression? Did we encourage fault-finding, tale-bearing, personal remarks, bickering, quarrelling, self-reference, selfishness in any form, food-grabbing, attention-monopolizing, best-chair-taking?

While a little child learns something from everybody and everything with which it is permitted to come into contact, it has those specially assigned to train it. What is my own attitude towards those called in—on one plane or another—to train me spiritually, mentally and practically? We surely are not neglected foundlings. What has been my attitude, and what is yours, towards our associates of varying degree? What should it have been? What attitude did I insist that my little sons maintain towards maids, nurses, doctors and the several varieties of teachers? How did I expect them to act towards their relatives and friends? What hint is there in this for you and for me? Am I to regard a man in my business, whom I may dislike, as an "accident", to be ignored, or is there a lesson to be learned from and through him, as suggested in those quotations from *Light on the Path*? How do I seem to others? Do I reflect credit or do I bring shame upon my spiritual family? Who is blamed when I appear like a spoilt child?

"What must I do, to do better?" We have not taken up one of the most potent forces that a child uses, and uses with a larger degree of consciousness and deliberation, I have come to believe, than most of us have been in the habit of crediting. This force is the habit of imitation. Ignatius used only two books to supplement the intuitive knowledge he had at his command, after his awakening to consciousness at Manresa. One was the Bible and the other was Thomas à Kempis' famous work, *The Imitation of Christ*. In our self-centred attitude, combined with our recognition of our own unworthiness, are we not apt to think that it would be presumptuous, and even impossible, for us to "imitate" the Master? Children, even children who have grown beyond little children, have none of this falsity, this cowardice. They frankly strive to imitate a beloved and admired parent, even if that parent seem to the world not a fit subject for imitation. Children play—and enter into their play—that they are heroes and kings, "perfect even as the Father is perfect". Grown-ups, who have failed to obey in their own lives the Master's injunction to be "as little children", usually take great pains to destroy the creatively imaginative faculty, and the power and readiness to imitate, instead of making the effort to train and guide them into right channels.

Digitized by Google

Earlier in our consideration of why you and I fail, in fact at the very start, we found that only a consciousness of imperfection leads to success. Does not a little child know that it is dependent and helpless, yet remain unaffrighted? Does not a little child early learn that it must try, and keep on trying, and that "I do not want to" does not lessen pressure, but, instead, increases it? This, let us note, comes from wise and loving, but merely human, parents. Is not the answer to "Why do I fail?" to be found in our failure even to try to follow the Master's key-words, and in our persistent refusal to seek to enter his kingdom as little children?

Therefore, is not the answer to the positive "What must I do, to do better?" the use of the positive aspect of that same answer?—that we should read within the Master's key-words definite directions, which we must at once set out to obey. This means that you and I must deliberately adopt the attitude of little children. Is it as difficult and as impracticable as our lower natures will try to make us believe? Is it not the easy and successful attitude of every eager military and naval cadet, every earnest student of any science or art, every sincere disciple of any cult? Shall it not be your attitude and mine from now on? But there is one caution, which it would seem, we must follow in what is otherwise a perfectly reckless adventure; reckless because, child fashion, soldier fashion, we must follow our Leader without thought or questioning, forgetting all thought of our own safety, when once he has accepted us as followers. This caution is to keep and to maintain the little child's unfailing faith, its blind trust, its unflinching hope, its unwavering loyalty, its calm sense of personal helplessness (humility), and its ever-growing love.

I gleaned this warning from studying the Master's own teaching, as follows:

> "Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.
>
> "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive."

Must we not, therefore, steadfastly maintain the powers of a little child, in order that we may "doubt not" (even once) and may keep on "believing" as we pray? Do we grown-ups not fail at these two points?

There are many of us who owe our desire to cease to be failures to that great-hearted, child-hearted, brave, wise, and fearless disciple and student, Mr. Griscom. Had you and I ever even started to do, what he so often told us to do, would we not be nearer now to all that he loved? As we read those guide-books and manuals of arms, that he has left for us in his writings, we shall each of us, find our own answer to the question "Why do I fail?" I have been trying to think what he

Digitized by Google

would have said. I have gone back over our talks, and have reviewed, in mind, his QUARTERLY articles. He never gave too strong meat to babes, so perhaps he never used the exact words I am going to suggest; but it seems to me that the attempt to use his fearlessness, in a search to find, at all hazards, the truth about oneself, might give us warrant to say that his answer to this question might well have been—"Because you choose to be a failure".

Let us, in love of his Master, and as a belated tribute to his loving efforts for us, make a new, a right, an irrevocable, choice today! Let us "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage", remembering that "the things which are impossible with men are possible with God", whose plenary delegate is our Master.

If we do this, shall we not get some inkling of the powers that lie within Mr. Griscom's oft-repeated: "We can do nothing without the Master's aid. I do not believe we could even make a bare living",—which has often been so meaningless to some of us?

Shall we not prove, with saint and mystic, "that there is power in humility and its consciousness of self-helplessness; indeed, that from humility alone does power spring"?

G. W.

God makes known his will to those who ask him in simplicity. Let him who has a state of life to choose, or who would desire to know what he should do for the sanctification of his soul, renounce, first, all natural inclinations, and place himself generously in the hand of God, firmly resolved to obey him. Let him then weigh the pro and con, meditating on some truth of Scripture, drawing the consequences which are the result, and applying them to the end for which God has created us. If he still doubt what part he should take, let him suppose himself on his death-bed, or at the last judgment, and then determine to do what he would wish then to have done.—IGNATIUS LOYOLA.

Digitized by Google

FROM A JOURNAL

I WAS thinking of Eldridge today, and of his disappointment at being removed still longer from the centre of things theosophic. At any rate, he is fortunate in being where he is, close to Nature, listening to the whisperings of the pines and hemlocks, drinking in the clear, crisp air, and breathing the serenity of those wooded slopes. So he would seem to have compensations for being removed so far from the rest of us, in being able to fortify himself inwardly against the day when he will return to this heavy, murky atmosphere, and the sensuous, psychic whirl and pressure of city life. In some respects he is rather to be envied than pitied in his temporary isolation, but he knows as well as I do that I would not change places with him. He would give a great deal to be here too, I know, where the fight is hotter, but where at the same time we have the encouragement and inspiration of so many fellow members to aid us in our efforts to "live the life".

A number of us met for lunch to-day,—it was missing him there which brought him to my mind—and as we sat and smoked over our coffee, a discussion took place regarding the significance of some of the events happening in the world. It was agreed that the Germans have succeeded in having the attention of practically every nation but France drawn off from enforcement of the terms of the Treaty. The activities of the Bolsheviki, which we have every reason to believe Germany instigated and has continuously aided and abetted, have resulted in a crushing defeat of the anti-Bolshevist forces in the South; but it was agreed that a far more serious and far-reaching development is the growing tendency to compromise with the Bolsheviki, and apparently to abandon all intention of outlawing them from any relations with civilized nations. It was pointed out that the present Ministry in Great Britain is reported to be about to conclude a trade agreement with Soviet Russia; also, that while it is true that our own Administration sometime ago announced to the world that it would not recognize Soviet Russia and would have nothing to do with the Bolsheviki,—should other countries follow the lead of Great Britain, it is decidedly a question how steadfastly the powers that be would adhere to that admirable profession, to say nothing of carrying it out by positive action, instead of maintaining a negative attitude of aloofness, and disinclination to do anything to put out the fire that we, by precept, example and encouragement, helped to start. So many of our bankers and business men are anxious to establish trade relations, not only with the Bolsheviki, but with the Germans, that there is every reason to fear that the Administration will be unable much longer to withstand the pressure being put upon it to follow Great Britain's example. We also discussed the disgraceful manner in which politicians are hedging and compromising, not only with this menace

Digitized by Google

from without, but with the fearfully ominous murmurings from within,—from a people weary of war, whose labouring class, as a unit, has come out in open defiance of any attempt on the part of their Government to drag them into war—not even war in defence of righteousness and for the life of civilization itself—and have threatened completely to tie up all industry if their demands are not heeded. One of our number remarked that these things are causing cold chills to run up and down the spines of many people, but that he feared that this was due to apprehension as to what might happen to their pocket-books, rather than to any anxiety lest the forces of evil should run amuck once more. Before we parted, we all agreed that the root of the trouble lay in a lack of knowledge of the fundamental principles of right living, and of the inspiration and help to make a sincere effort to carry them out, which Theosophy supplies; that it was a pity that the rulers of the nations did not possess some of the wisdom and insight of the QUARTERLY, which from the day of its signing declared that the Armistice was a hideous mistake—worse, a great wrong, because it was a compromise with evil;—and that if the evil with which Germany had identified herself had been crushed as it should have been, this latest monster would not have dared to raise its head.

Thinking about this luncheon conversation afterward led me to re-read the resolution passed by the Convention in 1919:

"*And whereas* in the conduct of that war when victory was within reach, a truce was declared by an armistice whose conditions were designed to preclude the possibility of further aggression of evil, but not designed to crush that evil;

"*And whereas* the armistice has been followed by the growth of anarchy and Bolshevism, the spread beneath the surface throughout the allied nations of the very evil that Germany personified,

"*Be it resolved* that compromise with evil is as wrong as is neutrality; and that Bolshevism is the very opposite of Brotherhood and of all for which The Theosophical Society stands."

One sees on every hand evidences of a disposition to compromise with evil—to do anything and everything to avoid becoming embroiled in another war. The "war to end all wars" has been officially declared ended, but the world is beginning dimly and in dismay to realize something of the truth of the prophetic words of this resolution. Our own country, alas! seems to have learned little from the Great War. We were suddenly awakened from our sleep of complacent self-indulgence to forget our selfish interests and to throw ourselves unreservedly into a great Cause for a few short months; but, as a nation, we seem to have relapsed into a worse condition than before, fatuously believing that we have performed a noble and unselfish service to humanity! Oh, the pity of it, that this beloved country of ours was so blinded by self as not to see the light sooner, resulting in our shamefully tardy entrance into the

Digitized by Google

War, and then to have lacked the insight and courage to insist upon no compromise with evil when the end was in sight! It occurred to me to ask myself: To what extent is the United States responsible for the present conditions in Russia,—for our example, aid and encouragement given to a "Revolution", which, under the guise of freeing its people from the shackles of autocracy, has rapidly developed into a wild orgy of anarchy and murder? How far has the preaching of "Democracy" as the panacea for all the ills of the nations, fanned to a flame this mad desire to throw off all restraint and discipline? Men say that the good common sense of the American people will prevent Bolshevism from making any headway here, and that the "staunch Americanism" of our people, as a whole, is untainted by the poison introduced, as they think, by a few foreign agitators. But students of Theosophy know better. We know that every one of us is tainted with this thing; that the battle is raging in the hearts of men everywhere, and that far from Americans being "separate" from this malign influence, we are completely enmeshed in it. Men shudder at the horrors perpetrated by the unrestrained Bolshevist; but is not the same evil spirit active in us, resulting in our daily committing offences which on their plane are fully as serious, if not more so than those we abhor in the Bolshevist? "Remember that the sin and shame of the world are your sin and shame; for you are a part of it; your Karma is inextricably interwoven with the great Karma."

Recently I have read a most interesting little book by Mr. Judge, entitled: *Echoes from the Orient,* which has something to say bearing upon this subject. "The first Echo from the burnished and mysterious East which reverberated from these pages sounded the note of Universal Brotherhood. Among the men of this day such an idea is generally accepted as vague and utopian, but one which it will do no harm to subscribe to; they therefore quickly assent, and as quickly nullify the profession by action in the opposite direction. *For the civilization of today, and especially of the United States, is an attempt to accentuate and glorify the individual.* The oft-repeated declaration that any born citizen may aspire to occupy the highest office in the gift of the nation is proof of this, and the Mahâtmas who guard the truth through the ages while nations are decaying, assert that *the reaction is sure to come in a relapse into the worst forms of anarchy.* The only way to prevent such a relapse is for men really to practise the Universal Brotherhood they are willing to accept with the tongue. These exalted beings further say that all men are—as a scientific and dynamic fact—united, whether they admit it or not; and that each nation suffers, on the moral as well as the physical plane, from the faults of all other nations, and receives benefit from the others also even against its will." (The italics are mine.) This book was published in 1890, but the prophecy therein stated to have been made by the Mahâtmas of "a relapse into the worst forms of anarchy" is being fulfilled before our eyes today. It does not require much

Digitized by Google

elaboration of the fundamental principle involved to discover, among other things, that the "attempt to accentuate and glorify the individual" inevitably leads to its logical sequence—the accentuation and glorification of classes of individuals as against other classes, and the desire of one class, not merely to dominate, but to crush all others that do not servilely submit to it. The poison of "envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness" has pervaded the thoughts and hearts of large bodies or factions of men, who are seeking control of, or who temporarily hold, the reins of government, so that the thing has assumed a *quasi* political aspect. We know that it is one of the rules of the Society to have nothing to do with politics as such, but that nevertheless its members are pledged to loyalty to Truth and to principle. What are some of the eternal principles which are being so flagrantly violated today? Does it occur to us that the besetting sin of the age in which we live is separateness? The root of separateness is self-will, self-assertion, selfishness. Surveying the actions of men in the world today we run through the whole gamut of self-will, from the Bolshevist who aims to impose his will upon others at whatever cost—even murder—to the boarding-school girl sighing for "self-expression." Educators are encountering the same problem in their work, and are beginning to realize that the appalling amount of self-will exhibited even in very young children is a menace to all discipline and a barrier to the development of character. Physicians have found that one of the most frequent causes of insanity in children is self-will. In whatever direction we turn we find the tendency to "accentuate and glorify the individual" developed to a truly alarming extent.

We have seen some of the effects produced by the "glorification of the individual" in the events that are happening in the world today, and some of the results arising from compromise with evil. We, as students of Theosophy, should see more deeply into the spiritual significance of these things, both in our own lives and in the lives of those about us. Mr. Judge has told us that individuals as well as nations suffer from the faults of others; also that they receive benefit from the others even against their will. In times like these, when multitudes of men everywhere are throwing off all restraint, submitting to no authority whether of God or man, and seeking to promote only their own selfish interests as individuals or as a class, it is clearly the duty of those of us who have been permitted to see a little—even if only a very little—of the Light, to stand firm, to resist this flood of self-glorification and self-seeking which is all but engulfing the world, and thus to "try to lift a little of the heavy Karma of the world, and to give our aid to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory." The disciple who is filled with a sincere desire for unselfish service of humanity, knows that before he can help others he must, as *Light on the Path* puts it, have acquired some certainty of his own,—must have

Digitized by Google

discovered the seed of disobedience lurking within himself, and earnestly, diligently and prayerfully have set about its eradication.

This little primer of Theosophy—*Echoes of the Orient*—contains so much that explains present day problems—their causes and their remedy—that it is only another bit of evidence of what all students of Theosophy know, that the world today stands in great need of knowledge of the fundamental spiritual laws revealed by the Wisdom Religion, and through that knowledge to discover that all sin, and its consequent sorrow and suffering, arises from violation of those laws. Theosophy teaches that the only way in which the selfish, self-willed personality can be suppressed is through unselfish love of humanity, and, as Mr. Judge writes, "for men really to practise the Universal Brotherhood they are willing to accept with the tongue". (By the way, I think that this little book, the sub-title of which is: "A Broad Outline of Theosophical Doctrines", is an excellent one to place in the hands of those inquiring about Theosophy.)

In the silence of his forests and hills, Eldridge can look down upon all this beastly mess of which I have been writing. His physical surroundings, it seems to me, are typical of those we should all have inwardly, giving us the impetus to "lift up our eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh our help". Having obtained all the help and inspiration we are capable of receiving, we should then turn steadfastly to the task of doing what we can to "lift the heavy Karma of the world", and this, as we know very well, can only be accomplished by making a persistent, earnest effort to eradicate in ourselves those tendencies which we see reflected in the world about us.

H.

If thou sin once, thou hast need of one act of mercy whereby that sin may be taken away; if twice or thrice, or peradventure oftener, then thou wilt have need of as many acts of "mercy" as thy sins are in number.—JOHN FISHER.

God's love for poor sinners is very wonderful, but God's patience with ill-natured saints is a deeper mystery.—DRUMMOND.

Digitized by Google

TAO-TEH-KING

AN INTERPRETATION OF LAO TSE'S BOOK OF THE WAY AND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

I

1. *The way that can be told is not the eternal Way. The word that can be spoken is not the eternal Word.*

Unnamed, It is the source of heaven and earth. Named, It is the Mother of all things.

He who is ever without desires sees Its spiritual essence. He who is ever under desire sees only Its limits.

These two, differing in name, are the same in origin. They are the mystery of mysteries. This is the door of spiritual life.

THE eternal Way, Tao, is the Logos, and was so rendered by the first translators of this text. In the older Shu-King is the sentence: "Let us learn all things in harmony with the Mind of God"; the Logos being the Mind of God, as well as the Word of God.

The Logos has two aspects: unnamed, and named; the unmanifest and the manifested Logos. From the manifested Logos comes the visible universe, the unity of heaven and earth. Heaven means here the immortal sea of spiritual consciousness; earth is the realm of manifested nature.

Desires, the innumerable attachments to the things of manifested nature, bind the conciousness to external things. Freedom from these multiplied attachments sets the consciousness free to return to its home in the sea of immortal consciousness. Yet spiritual consciousness and visible nature are not antagonistic; for nature is the garment of spiritual consciousness, the Word made manifest in external life. Therefore he who relinquishes attachment to external nature finds his way to the spiritual consciousness which is the Life behind nature. He finds the Way, the door of spiritual life.

2. *When all men have learned the beauty of righteousness, the ugliness of sin is understood.*

When all men recognise goodness, then evil is understood.
In the same way, the manifest and the unmanifest define eachother.
Difficult and easy define eachother.
Long and short reveal eachother.
Height and depth manifest eachother.
Musical notes and the tones of the voice determine eachother.
Former and latter define eachother.
Therefore the Master works without working.

Digitized by Google

He teaches in silence.
Then all things come into being, and he gives them fruition.
He brings them into being, yet seeks not to possess them.
He perfects them, yet seeks no reward.
When his work is accomplished, he remains detached from it.
He seeks no glory, and is therefore glorious.

Lao Tse is seeking to make clear the relation of the unmanifested and the manifested Logos to eachother, as poles of the same Being. Spirit and matter are neither separated nor antagonistic; they are two aspects of the One. While the One is undivided, it remains unrevealed. Only by differentiation, by polarization into Spirit and matter, are the supplementary natures of Spirit and matter made apparent.

This, Lao Tse makes clear by similes: beauty and ugliness make eachothers' nature manifest; righteousness and sin bring eachother into clear relief. Long and short, high and low, define eachother. So Spirit and matter, subject and object, perceiving consciousness and what is perceived, define eachother.

Spirit is the positive, matter the negative pole. The Master, he who has relinquished all attachments to the things of matter, he whose consciousness has returned to the immortal sea of consciousness, thereafter works with Spirit. As Spirit works unseen, behind the veil of matter, so he works. As the divine Word teaches in silence, so he teaches. The laws of the working of Spirit are manifested in everything he does. Like Spirit, he is creative; like Spirit, he seeks no personal reward. Like the hidden Spirit, he seeks no glory; therefore, like the hidden Spirit, he is eternally glorious.

3. *The seclusion of the Masters keeps the world from strife.*
A low esteem of wealth keeps the world from covetousness.
When objects of desire are hidden, men's hearts are undisturbed.
Therefore, where the Master rules, he empties the heart of desires. He fills the inner nature. He strengthens its bones.
He constantly stills the mind and abates desires.
Those who have knowledge, he restrains from bondage to action.
He himself stands free from bondage to action; therefore all whom he rules abide in quietude.

It would appear that Lao Tse consistently uses the similitude of the king and the kingdom in exactly the sense of the New Testament: the divine kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. The phrase for the kingdom, the empire, in the original: "that which is under heaven," makes still clearer the already transparent meaning.

The ruler of the kingdom is the Master; the kingdom consists of those who, loving the Master, obey him, rejoicing in his rule.

Digitized by Google

Without doubt, Lao Tse has also in mind the ideal government of an earthly kingdom. There is no contradiction in this. The ideal for an earthly kingdom is, that it should be governed by a Master; that the divine will should be done "as in heaven, so on earth." Only then can the kingdom come.

But the time is not yet come. It can only come through general obedience to spiritual law. While rebellion against divine law is rife, the coming of a Master brings only strife and hostility. Therefore the seclusion of the Masters keeps the world from strife.

Lao Tse again makes this clear by similes: When wealth is exposed to those whose hearts are full of greed, covetousness is fanned into flame. In exactly the same way, the coming of the Master to a world full of evil and rebellion, inflames evil and rebellion. Therefore a Master has said: "If I had not come, they had not had sin."

But, even though not publicly recognized, the Master has his kingdom, in the hearts of his disciples. There he rules, emptying their hearts of desire. He enriches the inner nature, and builds the frame of the spiritual man. He stills the material mechanism of that mind which has been formed to "think matter." As the intelligence of his disciples awakens, he teaches them to keep their hearts free from bondage to action, from the thirst for personal reward; he makes clear to them that their right is to the action, but not to the personal reward; not to the result, as it may feed and flatter the lower self in them. And he has the power thus to rule and teach, because he himself stands free from bondage to action; therefore all whom he rules, his disciples, abide in quietude of heart; toiling in his work, but for the work's sake, without thought of personal reward.

4. *The Way seems empty. As it is tried, it is found inexhaustible.*
Oh, how profound it is! It seems to be the Forefather of all beings.
It quiets impetuosity. It looses bonds. It tempers its splendour. It follows lowliness.
Oh, how pure it is! It seems to abide for ever.
It is the Son of I-know-not. It seems to have been before the Lord of Heaven.

The carnal mind, says Saint Paul, is enmity against God. Therefore, to the carnal mind, the mind full of desire, bound by innumerable appetites and attachments to carnal things, the Way appears not merely empty; it is altogether invisible.

But when, through the revulsion from carnal things, the little spark in the heart begins to seek and to find the Way, then it is found to be an infinite Way, whose treasures are inexhaustible.

The Way is the Life; not a static, arrested Life, but Life moving ever from glory to glory; therefore it is called the Way. And this Life,

Digitized by Google

which ceaselessly progresses toward new splendours, is the Forefather of all beings.

When the Life and the Light take up their dwelling in the heart made empty of desires, impetuous desire is stilled. The bonds of attachment to the things of desire are loosed. The captive heart is made free. But the infinite Light does not shine forth in full radiance in the beginning, to dazzle and blind the eyes of the disciple. Its splendour is tempered for his growing sight, while that sight is yet dim. The Way is the way of humility.

As the Way is followed, it is found to be the path of all purification; it reveals itself as the eternal Way.

As the unmanifested Logos, the Way is the Firstborn of the Unknowable, Son of the hidden Father. From the unmanifested Logos spring the creative Powers; therefore it antecedes the Lord of Heaven.

5. *Heaven and earth are without partiality. They regard all creatures as the dog (of straw in the sacrifice).*

The Master is without partiality. He regards mankind as the dog of straw.

The Being that is between heaven and earth is like the bellows of the forge, empty, yet possessing power. Put in motion, it sends forth more and more.

He who would tell the Way, soon becomes silent.

It is better to follow the way of work with detachment.

The straw dogs are placed on the altar, to ward off evil. They are honoured with gifts. But, when the sacrifice is ended, they are thrown away.

Lao Tse takes this as a symbol of impartiality. Heaven and earth are impartial, giving sun and rain alike to the just and the unjust. So the Master is impartial, without predilection, without favoritism, giving his life for the just and the unjust.

The same high virtue of impartiality, which is ideal justice, is enjoined by the Bhagavad Gita:

"He who is free from over-fondness, from partiality, meeting glory and gloom alike, who exults not nor hates, his perception is set firm."

And the same impartiality is taught in another way by the Western Master:

"Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Digitized by Google

Since heaven and earth, Spirit and matter, are the two poles of the manifested world, that world itself is the Being between them; at first, before the beginning of Time, still and motionless; then, when the dawn comes, gradually stirred into manifestation.

But the divine Way, the Way of divine things, is so full of infinities, that he who seeks to tell it in words, is soon reduced to silence.

Better than words, to reveal the Way, is the following of the Way itself, by the path of disinterested obedience, the path of work without attachment.

Perhaps the best description of that path is to be found in the second book of the *Bhagavad Gita,* just quoted:

"Thy right is to the work, but never to its fruits of personal reward; let not the fruit of thy work be the motive, nor yet take refuge in abstinence from works.

"Standing in union with the Soul, carry out thy work, putting away attachment, O conqueror of wealth; equal in success and failure, for equalness is called union with the Soul."

But the principle of detachment, of high disinterestedness in work, is the main theme of the *Bhagavad Gita,* running through it all like a thread of gold. And in this principle of detachment, the Gita most closely approaches Lao Tse's teaching.

6. *The spirit of the valley dies not. It is called the mysterious Mother.*

The door of the mysterious Mother is called the source of heaven and earth.

It is eternal and seems to manifest itself.

He who enters into it, finds rest.

The spirit of the valley is Humility. For only through humility is it possible to find the Way. The whole personality must be dissolved. The nothingness of self must be realized through and through, in will as well as in thought, before the light from within can illumine the heart.

When through humility the Way is found, it is found that the Power of the Way is the Life and source of all things. The mysterious Mother is called in India the feminine Viraj, or Vach, the feminine aspect of the Logos; that which Saint Paul calls the Wisdom of God and the Power of God; namely, God's power to make things manifest. This mysterious Mother, this formative Power, is eternal, and seems to manifest itself; the manifestation is a seeming, in the sense that it is not eternal. For only the Eternal is, in the fullest sense, real. All that is put forth in manifestation, will, in the fulness of time, be withdrawn from manifestation. He who would find rest, must seek it, not in manifested things, but in the Life which is behind manifested things, in the Logos, which, in all spiritual scriptures, is called the everlasting Home.

Digitized by Google

7. *Heaven and earth endure.*

If they endure, it is because they live not for themselves. It is because of this that they endure.

So the Master puts himself after others, yet remains the first.

He is detached from his body, yet conserves his body.

Is it not because he has no desires for himself, that all his desires are fulfilled?

Again, the teaching of high disinterestedness, of detachment from the desire of personal reward. Heaven and earth are impartial, sending sun and rain upon the just and the unjust. Heaven and earth are free from self-seeking, and therefore they endure for ever. The Master is, like the great Life which breathes through heaven and earth, impartial and free from self-seeking. Therefore let the disciple also be rid of all the wills of self.

8. *The spirit of goodness is like water.*

Water excels in doing good to all, yet strives not.

It seeks the lowly places rejected by others.

Therefore he who is like this, draws near to the Way.

His chosen dwelling place is in humility.

His heart loves the depth of the abyss.

His gifts are given with impartial love.

He speaks words of faithfulness.

His government brings peace.

He is skilful in all he undertakes.

He acts in all things with timeliness.

He strives against none; therefore he is not opposed.

The most fitting commentary on Lao Tse's words concerning water, and, in general, what he says of the beneficence of heaven and earth, is the hymn of Saint Francis of Assisi, called the "Praises of the Creatures," more generally known as "The Canticle of the Sun." The quotation which follows is taken from the translation which Father Paschal Robinson has made from the earliest Italian manuscripts:

"Praise be to Thee, my Lord, with all Thy creatures,
Especially to my worshipful brother sun,
The which lights up the day, and through him dost Thou brightness give;
And beautiful is he and radiant with splendour great;
Of Thee, most High, signification gives.

"Praised be my Lord, for sister moon and for the stars,
In heaven Thou hast formed them clear and precious and fair.
Praised be my Lord for brother wind
And for the air and clouds and fair and every kind of weather,

Digitized by Google

By the which Thou givest to Thy creatures nourishment.
Praised be my Lord for sister water,
The which is greatly helpful and humble and precious and pure.
"Praised be my Lord for brother fire,
By the which Thou lightest up the dark.
And fair is he and gay and mighty and strong.
"Praised be my Lord for our sister, mother earth,
The which sustains and keeps us
And brings forth diverse fruits with grass and flowers bright.
"Praised be my Lord for those who for Thy love forgive
And weakness bear and tribulation. . . ."

Here we have exactly the thought of the likeness between water, which is greatly helpful and humble and precious and pure, and those who, for love, forgive and bear weakness and tribulation, which Lao Tse had expressed seventeen or eighteen centuries before Saint Francis.

9. *It is better not to fill the vessel than to try to carry it when quite full.*

The blade that is over-sharpened loses its edge, even though it be tested with the hand.

The hall that is filled with gold and jade cannot be guarded.

He who has honours heaped upon him, and thereby grows proud, draws down misfortune upon himself.

He who has done great things and gained renown should withdraw himself.

Such is the Way of heaven.

These vivid parables instilling moderation and humility hardly need any comment. The last phrase but one is thus interpreted by one of the Oriental commentators:

"When a hero has accomplished great things and gained renown, let him realize that life is like the illusion of a dream, that riches and honours are like floating clouds. When his time comes, he must let slip the bonds of the heart, escaping from his earthly prison, and, rising above creatures, become one with the Way."

10. *The spiritual should rule the psychic nature.*

When he is one-pointed, these act in consonance.

When he masters the bodily powers, rendering them obedient, he is as one new born.

When he frees himself from the illusions of the mind, he puts away all infirmities.

If he would guard the people and bring peace in the kingdom, let him work with detachment.

Digitized by Google

When he accepts the opening and closing of the gates of heaven, he rests like a brooding bird.

Though his light penetrates everywhere, he appears as if knowing nothing.

He brings forth beings and nourishes them.

Though bringing them forth, he is without the desire of possession.

He cherishes them, yet looks for no reward.

He rules them, yet without dominating them.

This is called perfect righteousness.

Here again very little comment is needed, though it may be of interest once more to quote an Oriental commentator:

"The nature of the holy man is serene and at rest, the spiritual part of his being is invariably set firm, and is not drawn awry nor perverted by material things. Although the spiritual soul has taken the animal soul for its abode, yet the animal soul obeys it in all that it undertakes. The spiritual principle commands and directs the animal principle. The men of the multitude subject their natures to external things, their hearts are troubled, and then the spiritual soul is dominated by the animal soul. Lao Tse teaches men to hold the spirit firm, to rule the sensible nature, so that these two act together." C. J.

(*To be continued*)

Simplicity of intention, setting our hearts on accomplishing God's will alone, and minding neither reputation, popularity, comfort nor success—this is the only way to gain peace.—DIGNAM.

I have made a compact with my tongue never to speak, and with myself never to act, so long as my heart is troubled.—FRANCIS OF SALES.

Digitized by Google

STUDENTS' SCRAP BOOK

The Pineal Eye

STUDENTS of *The Secret Doctrine* will remember a fascinating section entitled "The Races with the 'Third Eye'", from which a few lines may be quoted: "The 'deva-eye' exists no more for the majority of mankind. The third eye is dead, and acts no longer; but it has left behind a witness to its existence. This witness is now the Pineal Gland" (II, p. 295, 1888).

That this fact is completely recognized by biologists today, may be shown by a quotation from Mr. C. W. Beebe's delightfully written and excellent book, *The Bird:*

"Fishes, frogs, lizards, birds, and mammals, through all the ages, have depended on these two eyes and have found them all-sufficient; but there are hints that once, long ago, the ancestors of all the higher animals had a sense-organ, probably of sight, like that of the mythical Polyphemus, in the centre of the head. In lizards this vestigial organ is sometimes quite well developed, having a nerve which leads up from the centre of the brain to a kind of translucent, lens-like scale which lies among the other scales of the skin, upon the centre of the forehead. In the long-extinct Ichthyosaurus this median eye was probably functional. In an embryo chick of even the third day this organ is remarkably prominent; but although traces of it always remain, yet it fades away to a vestige. Look with a hand-lens at the head of a polywog, and see the whitish dot between the eyes; or when you touch the 'soft spot' on the head of a human baby, let it recall the strange third eye of which it is the cause" (p. 478).

Mr. Beebe has very illuminating pictures of the "pineal eye" in the lizard and the embryo chick, to which students are referred.

It may be interesting to quote, from the Guatemalan Popol Vuh a passage, cited in an earlier number, depicting one of the "races with the third eye":

"Intelligence dwelt in them. They looked, they raised their eyes, their vision embraced all things; they beheld the whole world, and, when they contemplated it, their vision turned in an instant from the vault of the heavens, to regard anew the surface of the earth. Things most deeply hidden they saw at will, without need of moving beforehand; and when they turned their vision upon the world, they beheld all that it contains. . . ." (The Theosophical Quarterly, October, 1919, p. 120.)

There are several references to the Popol Vuh in *The Secret Doctrine.*

Digitized by Google

It is of high interest to find in Mr. Beebe's book an intuitive glimpse of another idea which recurs throughout *The Secret Doctrine,* that of returning cycles of Manvantaras:

"The beauty and genius of a work of art may be reconceived, though its first material expression be destroyed; a vanished harmony may yet again inspire the composer; but when the last of a race of living beings breathes no more, another heaven and another earth must pass before such a one can be again."

According to *The Secret Doctrine,* this is exactly what does happen and has happened for ages. The memory of the vanished form remains in the mind of the "composer," in the thought of the Logos and the Divine Architects, who bring it forth again to the light of day when the cycle of its manifestation returns.—C. J.

* * * * *

Lemurian and Atlantean Fish and Plants

Few books with a more pervading charm of personality, of style and theme, have appeared during the last twenty or thirty years than the five volumes entitled *Memories of the Months,* by Sir Herbert Maxwell, who has many titles to fame, not the least of which is, that he was the author of the Wild Birds Preservation Act.

Speaking of the Problem of Dispersal as illustrated by some of the smaller fresh-water fish, he says:

"Consider, for example, the suggestions offered by the genus Galaxias, consisting of about fourteen species of small fresh-water fishes confined to the southern hemisphere. . . . The important fact is that one species, Galaxias attenuatus, is identical in Tasmania, New Zealand, the Falkland Islands, and the Fuegian region of South America. It almost amounts to an axiom of evolution that the same species does not take independent rise in areas remote from each other. Yet this little Galaxias cannot be an immigrant into South America from Australasia, nor vice versa. Thousands of miles of salt water bar the way. The suggestion is obvious that in the Tertiary epoch terrestrial connection existed between South America and Australasia, and that Galaxias preserves unchanged the features of ancestors which existed anterior to the severance of the two continents. . . . Coming now to the northern hemisphere, there is to be noticed the presence of several identical species in Europe and North America. . . . In the burbot (Lota vulgaris) we come to a fish singular in many respects, among others, that it is the only fish of the cod family inhabiting fresh water, and not only so, but absolutely impatient of salt water. Practically it is a hake, and at a remote period probably was a marine fish. But at the time when it acquired the exclusively fresh-water habit there must have been terrestrial connection between Europe and America, for the burbot is now the same in both these continents, though it does not extend into Asia (Third Series, pp. 49-52).

Digitized by Google

Speaking of "a lovely little plant, the bog asphodel (Narthecium ossifragum), of which the blooming season exactly corresponds with the sweet o' the year," Sir Herbert Maxwell says:

"This delicate little lily contains a mystery in its modest frame. It is a native of the northern parts of both Europe and America, yet it does not occur in Asia, as almost every other plant does which is found wild in the other two continents; nor does it extend into the Arctic Circle, whence such plants as bearberry, common ling or heather, bracken, wintergreen, Loiseleuria (our only British rhododendron), and the lovely Linnæa, have descended from a common centre into all three segments of the northern hemisphere. . . . How, then, is its existence to be accounted for on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean? Shall it be subpœnaed some day as a witness for the lost continent Atlantis, like that apparently insignificant, but, as we are informed, highly significant little fish, the so-called Australian trout (Galaxias)?" (p. 155.)

Elsewhere, speaking of the Bee and Fly and Spider orchids, Sir Herbert Maxwell writes:

"How shall we attempt to account for these and scores of other instances of deliberate deception? Plants, so far as we are informed, are destitute of will or intelligence; even if they possessed them, it is not possible to understand how they could modify their own structure. Yet it is almost equally difficult to imagine the Ruler of the universe occupying Himself in imitating some of the humblest of His creatures, such as spiders and bees, in order to protect others still more humble, such as orchids. . . . For some purposes it is to be greatly regretted that we have abandoned our belief in fairies" (First Series, p. 81).

Here is really a hint of the elemental powers which, under the guidance of higher Architects, do, in fact, carry on this work of shaping and moulding, according to *The Secret Doctrine*.—C. J.

* * * * *

On Mummies

The other day I picked up a book on Egypt (*The Eastern Nations and Greece*, by Myers) and opened it at the sentence: "The first need of the soul was the possession of the old body, upon the preservation of which the existence of the soul depended. If the body should waste away, the double, it was believed, would waste away with it. Hence the anxious care with which the Egyptians sought to preserve the body against decay by embalming it."

It occurred to me that, as the astral body or double does not disperse until the physical body is disintegrated, the Egyptians thought that by preserving the physical they could keep the astral body in existence until the return of the reincarnating Ego, which would then incarnate with the same astral body and so preserve the form, memory, and physical aptitudes of its past life.

Digitized by Google

For what other reason did the Egyptians so carefully preserve the body, and surround it with objects calculated to attach the astral body and to maintain in it the memory of life? Offerings of food, not merely actual food, but images of food were left for it: the tomb was decorated with representations of events in which the deceased might be supposed to be peculiarly interested. Even his life-like wooden or limestone statue was left as a mould to which the memory might cling.

We know that the Egyptians thought that the astral body only would be detained with the body, because, in the papyri found with the dead, the principles of man are divided into three parts, the *ka*, the *ba* and the *khu*,—astral double, soul and intelligence or spirit.

Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, in his description of the funeral of Ani, says: "Meanwhile it was decided that Ani's funeral should be one of the best that money could purchase, and as, while he was alive, he was thought to be in constant communion with the gods, his relations ordered that his body should be mummified in the best possible way so that his soul (*ba*) and his intelligence (*khu*), when they returned some thousands of years hence to seek his body in the tomb, might find his *ka* or genius there waiting, and all three might enter the body once more and revivify and live with it forever in the kingdom of Osiris. No opportunity must be given to these four component parts of the whole of a man to drift away one from the other, and to prevent this the perishable body must be preserved in such a way that every limb of it may meetly be identified with a God and the whole of it with Osiris, the Judge of the Dead, and King of the Nether World" (*The Mummy*, p. 159).

This might seem to indicate that the Egyptians believed in the physical resurrection of the body, though we are told that their real doctrine did not differ from that of the Christians who believe in the resurrection of a spiritual body.

Why, then, did the Egyptians mummify the body?

I spoke of my conjectures to a friend. He said he had often speculated on the subject, himself, but that while he agreed with me that the purposes of the Egyptians were in the nature of black magic, he disagreed as to their motive and results.

After all, it is only the Dynastic Egyptians known to us who mumified the dead. The Peruvians, who descended from a race holding similar beliefs, had the same custom, and probably both peoples did so only in perversion of an earlier ritual, unconscious of its real signification, and perhaps, directed to it by consciously evil minds.

He said that, in his opinion, the Egyptians probably hoped, by prolonging the existence of the body with its lower skandhas of earthly passions beyond the regular cyclic period for the reincarnation of the Higher Ego, to escape from the lower elements entirely by default, so to speak, and in this way to avoid a certain measure of their "bad karma".

Digitized by Google

As a matter of fact it would be impossible for the skandhas to re-form before the total dissolution of the physical and astral bodies, and thus the Ego would be detained indefinitely in some plane of Devachan, or else in total unconsciousness. He also suggested that the life of the average Egyptian, more strenuous than that of the tired business man, and in the degenerate days thoroughly disillusioned, was such as to make him desire long periods in Paradise, or of sleep.

Yet another friend suggested that the motive of the Egyptians, when preserving the physical body, was the belief that, in this way, they could more easily recover the memory of the immediately preceding life, when reincarnating. The theory was, either that the astral body and the skandhas could reabsorb physical particles from the mummy, or that the preservation of the physical body tended to preserve the grosser particles of the astral body, and, in one way or the other make it easier to establish connection with the physical and lower astral memory of the previous incarnation.—JEUNESSE.

* * * * *

RIGHT RECEIVING

There is a grace of right giving. It is not easy to give. Some people become self-conscious when making a gift and hide their embarrassment behind brusqueness. Others, through lack of self-confidence, strain the situation through their efforts to evoke appreciation of their offering. Others, again, seem unable to let go of their gifts, clinging to them in their minds for days after they have been presented. To give with grace, to give rightly, generously, without taint of self, makes it easier to receive: and it is far more difficult to receive with grace than to give. For one thing, rightly to receive requires a far higher degree of generosity than is needed by the giver. To receive should be the supreme expression of giving. To give or to receive anything, from the most ordinary gift or service, up to that which involves the greatest sacrifice, puts to the test every quality of heart, of insight, of sympathy, which both giver and receiver may possess,—or which they may lack. But rightly to receive requires all three of the so-called theological virtues of faith, hope, charity. And the trouble is that most people imagine it is easy to receive, and not so easy to give, just as they think it easy to live and not so easy to die. But just as death is the quintessence of life—its concentration in a moment of time—so the act or art of receiving is the quintessence of the act or art of giving, and the most revealing of all tests of what a man is.—T.

Digitized by Google

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"THE lesson of the past quarter," echoed the Student. "You want me to tell you the thought which has bitten most deeply. I see. You purpose to turn the next "Screen of Time" into an experience meeting. Well,—I am willing. But I cannot claim to have made a discovery. I have merely come to a fixed conclusion, although, perhaps, after all, that means the same thing! In any case, my conclusion is that there is not one man in a hundred thousand who has the slightest mental conception of self-consciousness. It is not only that he possesses none: he cannot even imagine what it means. Students of Theosophy constantly use the term, and, like a great many other English terms they use, it is as meaningless to most people as Hebrew or Sanscrit. In fact, it would be less misleading to use a Sanscrit word, because, in that case we should know it could not be understood, and we should perhaps explain it, while, because we use an English term, we infer that it must be intelligible."

"Before you have finished," the Historian interrupted, "I assume you will tell us just what you mean by the term self-consciousness."

"As I see it," the Student replied, "the term means 'consciousness in a higher self, from which a lower self is observed.' Strictly speaking, it must mean 'consciousness centred in, and aware of itself, as the immortal self,'—the self which recognizes the personality as transitory, and itself as eternal. One of the saints made a practice of asking himself constantly about all things, 'How does this look in the eyes of the Eternal?' He did this so as to see the things of daily life in true perspective. It enabled him to look down upon himself and his feelings, and perhaps upon his thoughts also, which a truly self-conscious person does habitually while thinking. The processes of the mind are seen as entirely separate from the self. This, of course, is one of the meanings of detachment.

"It is difficult to realize, in my opinion, how very few people are self-conscious. For one reason, many are so absorbed in their own thoughts and feelings, that they remain permanently inside of them. Like children, they are 'absorbed absolutely in their own world of fancy.' They never see facts except as reflected in the distorting mirror of their own desires, fears, and self-interest. As a witty Frenchman, André Beaunier, expressed it,—'There are people who, when it rains, wonder what they have done to irritate God.' They live in a universe of which their own ego is the centre, and just as it used to be supposed that the sun, moon and stars exist solely as lights for the earth, and for the benefit of man, so these self-centred people, though quite unconsciously, proceed on the theory that their family, friends and neighbours exist to serve them. It is a characteristic of childhood, and, in a young child, is often

Digitized by Google

very winning. In a grown-up person, it is deplorable,—particularly when accompanied by intense mental activity, as it sometimes is, although the majority of those who have not developed self-consciousness are mentally dumb, like cattle. They ruminate; they do not think."

"Do you suggest that no one who is self-centred can be self-conscious?"

"I do not; because, for lack of a better term, we sometimes describe people as self-centred who are morbidly introspective. They are partly self-conscious, but, instead of looking down upon their mental and emotional states from a higher level, with detachment, they look at them sideways, from the plane of the mind, and identify themselves with the thoughts and feelings which they are examining. The vain man is always wondering what other people think of him. (The very vain man does not wonder, but takes it for granted that other people think of him as wonderful!). The proud man is interested chiefly in what he thinks of himself. The wise man, who is the humble man, is concerned solely with what God, or his Master, thinks of him. The wise man, therefore, is obliged to see and judge himself from the highest level of consciousness which he can reach. He is self-conscious in the higher sense."

"I have been thinking about your definition of self-consciousness," said the Sage. "Must we not include more than you suggested, or, rather, does not your definition assume an understanding which does not exist? You said, I think,—'consciousness centred in, and aware of itself, as the immortal self.' You have in your mind that, because aware of itself as the immortal self, consciousness must necessarily be aware of the whole range of its activities, and that the sphere, which is sub-conscious in most people, has now been brought into full observation. I doubt whether most people would know that that is what your words imply."

"I agree with you," commented the Student. "It was stupid of me. Please proceed."

"Perhaps this diagrammatic figure will help us. Imagine your consciousness represented by a horizontal line. Below it is a vast sphere which we will call the sub-conscious mind. It is made up of elementals. They are conscious centres of desire. They constitute the instinctive self. Some of these elementals are bad. Others are not. Among them is the instinct of self-preservation, which, if it be more powerful than a man's ideals, becomes his enemy and may destroy his soul. If, however, it remains a man's servant, as it should, it may be regarded as wholly good.

"The trouble is that most people are worked, like marionettes, by their own elementals, whose desires they make their own. In most cases, even those people who have reached the stage of self-examination will attribute some word or act of theirs to a motive which came into their minds after they had spoken, as a presentable motive, while in truth they

Digitized by Google

have been actuated by an entirely different motive, of which they were not conscious, and which originated in some elemental of vanity, or lust, or irritation, or desire for comfort, or what not.

" 'Sub-conscious' means outside of consciousness. In other words, there is a large part of himself in which a man is not conscious at all. When he is fully self-conscious, he will know and understand every one of his elementals; he will be conscious in every atom of his lower nature. That which was hidden or 'occult' will be revealed to him.

"What is true of the lower nature is equally true of the higher: that which was hidden or 'occult' will be revealed to him as he becomes self-conscious. Just as beneath the horizontal line, diagrammatically representing the ordinary level of consciousness, there is a vast sphere which we have called the sub-conscious mind, so, above that line, is a vast sphere which we may call the supra-conscious or supra-liminal mind. I do not mean, of course, that there is no consciousness on those 'beneath' or 'above' levels; I mean that only the exceptional man is aware of that consciousness: he has not extended his range of awareness to those planes. His consciousness functions on a single level. He has a two dimensional mind. He is unable to look down from above on his mental and emotional activities. He sees them, if at all, sideways, from their own level. They are as much 'himself' as that in him which observes. The man who has attained to any degree of self-consciousness, looks down on his lower nature from some height above it, and knows at least of the existence of strata above his normal level of consciousness, to which he can rise by prayer and meditation, and on which he aspires to live permanently."

"I confess," said the Engineer, "that I have not given much thought to the exact meaning of self-consciousness. It is evident, from what you have brought out, that it is not a static state, but that your hypothetical horizontal line is constantly moving up and down, as a man's centre of consciousness changes from higher to lower and back again. Further, because man, as Hermes said, is the mirror of the universe, it follows that we contain within ourselves, though not yet developed, the full possibilities of divinity on the one hand and of evil on the other hand. Consequently, no one can have attained the full measure of a man—to full self-consciousness—until he has identified himself with the Higher Self, the Atma; has become aware of, and has conquered, the whole gamut of evil, and has, in brief, become a Master. From that standpoint, such people as ourselves have merely touched the fringes of self-consciousness."

"True," answered the Sage; "but I am inclined to believe that there is a difference in kind, rather than in degree, between those people who have no self-consciousness and those who have some. I believe that self-consciousness is comparatively rare among human beings, and that those who have not attained it, are not really human, but are incarnated human elementals, who perhaps are not even intended to become men and women,

Digitized by Google

in the true sense, until the next manvantara,—until the next great cycle of evolution. Russia, to my mind, is a nation which consists almost entirely of elementals, and which happens, for the moment, to be controlled by the worst among them."

"Madame Blavatsky was a Russian," the Visitor suggested.

"Yes, and Christ was a Jew," the Sage retorted. "Many human beings have been born in Russian bodies, but the Russians always killed them when they could,—witness the late Czar and his family. You will find, however, that most Russians of that calibre have been of mixed blood. The Czar's mother was a Dane."

"You people are much less intelligible when you talk in this way, among yourselves," the Visitor grumbled, "than when you speak in public at meetings of the Society. Your explanation of self-consciousness has been fearfully abstract. You have not been using what Quiller-Couch calls active verbs and concrete nouns. I think it is because, at an open meeting, you would instinctively sense and be impressed by the lack of response in your audience, and you would then take extra pains to illustrate your thesis by means of concrete examples. For instance, when one of you said that the average man does not think, but ruminates, what did you mean?"

"I meant," said the Student, "that if you could look into the head of a farm-hand, walking down a lane, you would probably find it empty, except for this sort of thing: 'That there cow . . . that there cow (many times repeated) . . . must milk it . . . must milk it' (five hundred times repeated). Or, in the head of some fashionably dressed woman driving up Fifth Avenue, you would perhaps find nothing except the face of another woman, and the word 'cat,' pronounced inaudibly, for an hour at a time . . . But I do not believe illustrations are necessary. When people read they have time to think, and so to turn general statements into concrete instances from their own experience. It is different during a speech."

"Before we leave the subject," said the Ancient, "I should like it made clear that we do not limit the use of the term, self-conscious, to the highest degree of its attainment; we do not suggest that no one is self-conscious until he has identified himself with Atma-Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul. On the contrary, up to a certain point, development in selfishness follows the same path as development in spirituality (the left-hand path produces many results which are similar to those of the right-hand path). The difference is one of motive. For his own selfish purposes, a man of business may develop, by self-discipline, a far more acute self-consciousness than an unselfish and sincerely religious man, who has not been taught self-discipline. The business man may have trained himself to be keenly aware of what he is doing, of how he is sitting or standing, of the expression on his face and in his eyes, of what he is saying and why—as all of us always should be,—while the man who is

Digitized by Google

merely good may be blissfully but stupidly unconscious. A trained musician is self-conscious in his fingers, and perhaps nowhere else. A disciple must in time become as self-conscious all over and through himself, as a pianist is in his fingers. He must watch and train himself, from a sense of religious duty.

"The fact remains that, whatever the motive of its development, self-consciousness is by no means confined to good and unselfish people. Quite the contrary,—unfortunately . . ."

"It is your turn," said the Recorder, addressing the Scientist. "What will you give me for the 'Screen'?"

"That cleanliness is *not* next to godliness," he answered. "That is one of the lessons which the last quarter has impressed vividly upon me. I visited a certain monastery. It shall be nameless. I was hunting for an old book. The monks were kind, and I am grateful. But I wish they had been clean! It was horrible. And what an impression to make on a visitor and a heretic! A Christ-like life and a dirty one: was that their idea? I realized afterwards that 'cleanliness is next to godliness' has done an immense amount of harm. Cleanliness is an essential part of godliness. It is just as important as honesty. And it involves hard work and constant attention. Because people swish themselves with cold water once a day, and brag later that it froze on them before they were dry,—they imagine that they have proclaimed their cleanliness and can defy all comers. Heaven help you if you get too near them! It is an unpleasant subject, I grant you. But I have suffered enough. A person who calls himself religious, ought to be immaculate."

"You are savage," laughed the Student.

"So would you be, if you had sat for an hour in the library of that monastery, with a monk within range on either side of you. But it goes deeper than that, seriously. It makes me angry that people should use religion as an excuse for their dirtiness. They say they have no time (they eat none the less). They regard attention to cleanliness as worldly. I wish that it were a characteristic of worldliness. The world would be a much nicer place to live in. Cleanliness is as rare as real attar of roses. Clothes ought to be hung up and aired every night. So far as I know, very few people do that. No man deliberately wants to be an offence to his fellows. He believes himself to be clean, just as he assumes he will go to heaven. He should darkly suspicion that he will go to hell and that meanwhile he is horribly dirty,—and he should act accordingly. Soap and hot water, nail brush and scissors, tooth brush and tooth paste, should be essentials of his religion. Christ was the only great religious teacher who does not seem to have included cleanliness among his rules for daily life, and this was only because he came, not to destroy, but to fulfil the law and the prophets, and these had damned the unwashed man and woman ages before and repeatedly thereafter. Buddha insisted upon cleanliness; and one thing I would wish, for the honour of The Theo-

Digitized by Google

sophical Society, is that its members should be distinguished above all others for their scrupulous and unremitting obedience to this basic law of the really religious life."

The Scientist had shot his bolt. He turned to the Lawyer.

"You will think, perhaps," the Lawyer responded, "that the thought which has bitten me most deeply during the past quarter, has not been particularly cheerful or even helpful. I have been imagining my own death, and what I shall think and feel when, looking back over my life from beyond, I realize that I can no longer speak or act,—that, so far as this life and environment are concerned, my chance is of the past. It has made me desire desperately to live for several years longer! Such a wasted life: such marvellous opportunities and so little accomplished! There are people who believe I have helped them, and who, if I were to die tomorrow, would be glad if they could help me in return. If they mean it, what a chance for them! I shall need their prayers as starving men need food. I shall need their work, their efforts, their sacrifice. My only justification, and, I am afraid, the only upward movement in my soul, will be derived from the fruit of their hearts and wills,—from the people who believe I have helped them. For a variety of reasons they will doubt my need. They will imagine that because I have worked, I shall be well provided for. True, I have worked, and often against the grain. But what of that? I have had opportunities, blessings, spiritual support, beyond all reckoning; and the point is that I know, as no one else can know, that I have used about one per cent of these gifts. It is not a question of sin, as the world counts sin. It is a question of what the Master sees as sin; of what my real self sees as sin. And you know the parable of the talents. Opportunities are 'talents'; every blessing, inner or outer, is a 'talent,' to be used and to be added to,—or to be buried. The advice and the warnings of friends or older students; the inspiration and guidance from spiritual reading; the moments of time which might have been used with profit; the energy of mind and will and imagination, which might have been used for Him: all these were 'talents,' and I know what I did with them.

"Some of you, even now, think that I exaggerate. We have promised to be frank, and I am going to be. You think that I exaggerate, partly because of your kindness to me,—your generosity of attitude and feeling. But there is an element also of self-defence. You have applied what I have said to yourselves, with results by no means pleasing. But, truly, I am not concerned with your sins, and, for the moment, I want you to forget them, too. My motive in speaking is not wholly selfish. I am asking for alms, but I know it will help others if they will grant what I ask. I know something of the lethargy which they try to overcome, and that they need every imaginable incentive to galvanize their wills into action. If, when the time comes, they were to believe in the greatness of my need, I know their hearts would respond, and that they

Digitized by Google

would do their utmost to repay, with interest, whatever they think they owe me. Foreseeing my need, and how terribly real it will be, do you not understand my desire to go on record now, before it is too late? to appeal now, while I still have life and breath?

"During the first three days following my death, I should like my friends to pray, as nearly as possible without ceasing, not for the repose, but for the illumination and strengthening of my soul. If, without undue inconvenience, they could meet once a day for that purpose, so much the better for me. (I am asking much, but if I ask at all, I may as well ask for what I want.) Next, during the first month following my death, I should like them to meet once a week, for the same purpose, and, during the balance of the first year, once a month. After that, I could not ask for more than one such meeting every year. And always for the same purpose.

"Prayer alone will not accomplish much. But prayer accompanied by 'fasting'—which means sacrifice, which means self-surrender, which means the faithful performance of all duties—will accomplish marvels.

"Meditation, spiritual reading, when there is no inclination for it, and purely for love of the Master, or for desire to love him: that is the kind of 'fasting' that will help me when I am dead.

"A kind word and a smiling face, when every nerve in the body is screaming and the tongue is full of bitterness; the rejection of some wrong, intrusive thought; the conquest of inertia by going to bed and by rising promptly;—any and every gift which involves sacrifice, with the prayer that it may help me, will give life to my soul.

"Presumptuous, perhaps, to suppose that others would take so much trouble on my behalf. If so, I am sorry. But unless I am greatly mistaken, the chief obstacle will be lack of faith,—not lack of good-will. Few people really believe in the efficacy of prayer, and still fewer realize that those upon whose time and energy the outer work makes great demands, must take from time and energy which otherwise they might give to prayer, to reading, to self-examination, and to other practices which are food for the soul. In some ways, naturally, they gain; but in other ways they lose. In any case, it is food, thus missed, that will be needed when the time comes, and that can be supplied by others vicariously. I do not know whether I shall be entitled to it. But I do know that I shall want it."

"We shall be in the same boat,—all of us," the Student commented. thoughtfully. "I am glad you spoke of it. We are amazingly dependent upon one another, even for our ultimate salvation. 'Buddha climbed on the shoulders of thousands of men,' or words to that effect. I suspect that our responsibility for those who are less evolved, perhaps, than we are, would be appalling, if we were to realize its extent. Our thoughts, our desires—not the appearance we present, but our thoughts when alone and unobserved—probably control the evolution of lower kingdoms, and

Digitized by Google

doubtless affect most seriously, for good or evil, the efforts of other men, particularly those who are in any way associated with us in the work. Heaven help us!"

"What some of you were saying about self-consciousness," the Orientalist volunteered at this point, "reminds me of an idea which has impressed itself on my mind constantly during recent months;—regret that the sacred books of antiquity are not better known to students of Theosophy in particular, and to the world in general. No religion can be understood by itself. All religions, because they come from the same source, are closely related; and just as we need a knowledge of Latin and Greek to understand English thoroughly, so also, we need to know the older religions and philosophies in order to understand Christianity.

"Take, for instance, the following passage from the *Mahâ-parinibbâna-Sutta* for the light it throws on self-consciousness. Buddha was asked: 'And how does a brother become thoughtful (self-conscious)?' His reply was:

> "He acts, O mendicants, in full presence of mind whatever he may do, in going out and coming in, in looking and watching, in bending in his arm or stretching it forth, in wearing his robes or carrying his bowl, in eating and drinking, in consuming or tasting, in walking or standing or sitting, in sleeping or waking, in talking and in being silent."

"As a result of having learned to act 'in full presence of mind' on all occasions, he will become qualified 'to do the work of an emissary'. He will possess 'the eight qualifications'. In the words of Buddha as given in the *Kullavagga:*

> He will "be able to hear and to make others listen, able to learn, able to bear in mind, able to discern and to make others discern, skilful to deal with friends and foes [you will notice, by the way, that Buddha was not so foolish as to imagine an era of universal friendliness], and no maker of quarrels . . . He who on entering a company that is violent of speech, Fears not, forgoes no word, disguises not his message [does not compromise], Is unambiguous in what he says, and, being questioned, angers not,—of such is surely the Bhikkhu worthy to go on a mission."

"Tell us some more," said the Student. "The Buddhist books, in small doses, are delightful as well as illuminating."

The Orientalist laughed. "They contain endless repetition, I know," he said. "But you must remember that they are records of songs, of chants. They were not intended to be read, but to be learned by heart—to be carried in the heart—and to be intoned.

"Perhaps this would interest you, if you do not know it already. In the *Vinaya Texts,* which include the *Pâtimokkha,* the *Mahâvagga,* the *Kullavagga,* and others,—Buddha gives detailed instruction under the general head of 'behaviour.' He did not draw up rules of conduct, but as one or another of his disciples came to him with a personal problem,

Digitized by Google

Buddha told him what to do about it. After Buddha's death, his disciples turned his advice into songs, so as not to forget; and, years later, met together and 'pooled' their priceless recollections, causing them to be written down, with practically no effort to make the story sequential or to avoid repetition.

"This is from the *Mahâvagga* (my quotations are from *The Sacred Books of the East*):

> At that time the Khabbaggiya Bhikkhus reproved for an offence a Bhikkhu who had not given them leave.
>
> They told this thing to the Blessed One.
>
> "No Bhikkhu, O Bhikkhus, who has not given leave, may be reproved for an offence. He who reproves (such a Bhikkhu), commits a dukkata offence. I prescribe, O Bhikkhus, that you reprove (Bhikkhus) for an offence (only) after having asked for leave (by saying), 'Give me leave, reverend brother, I wish to speak to you'."

"As his followers were human, and were much inclined to find fault with one another, Buddha had prescribed that the right to criticize must be asked and conceded. At the same time, however, he made criticism, in certain cases, an obligation, and confession of wrong-doing, a fundamental duty. The wrong-doer could not escape the consequences of his act, but confession purified him morally. One Bhikkhu might go to another Bhikkhu and say to him, 'I, Sir, have been guilty of such and such an offence ("a minor offence"), and that I confess'. The Bhikkhu addressed should ask: 'Do you acknowledge it?' 'Yes, I acknowledge it'. 'May you restrain yourself in future!' And if the offence were in truth a minor offence, the matter was then considered settled.

"But meetings were held regularly for the special purpose of confession. Thus:

> "I prescribe, O Bhikkhus, that the Bhikkhus, when they have finished their Vassa residence, hold Pavâranâ with each other [Literally, invite each other; i. e., every Bhikkhu present invites his companions to tell him if they believe him guilty of an offence, having seen that offence, or having heard of it, or suspecting it] in these three ways: by what has been seen, or by what has been heard, or by what is suspected. Hence it will result that you live in accord with each other, that you atone for the offences (you have committed), and that you keep the rules of discipline before your eyes.
>
> "And you ought, O Bhikkhus, to hold Pavâranâ in this way . . . Let the senior Bhikkhu adjust his upper robe so as to cover one shoulder, sit down squatting, raise his joined hands, and say: 'I pronounce my Parâvanâ, friends, before the Samgha, by what has been seen, or by what has been heard, or by what is suspected [i. e., I invite the Samgha to charge me with any offence they think me guilty of, which they have seen, or heard of, or which they suspect.]; may you speak to me, Sirs, out of compassion towards me; if I see (an offence), I will atone for it . . .'
>
> "Then let (each) younger Bhikkhu adjust his upper robe . . ." et cetera.

Digitized by Google

"For this, O Bhikkhus, is called progress in the discipline of the noble one, if one sees his sin in its sinfulness, and duly makes amends for it, and refrains from it in future."

"The disciples whom Buddha called to him, were far from being ready-made saints, though many of them attained Nirvâna during the life-time of their guru.

"On one occasion Buddha had been trying to restore concord between some quarrelsome neophytes. 'And for the third time', it is said, 'the Blessed One thus addressed those Bhikkhus':

"Enough, O Bhikkhus, no altercations, no contentions, no disunion, no quarrels!" And for the third time that Bhikkhu who adhered to the party who were wrong, said to the Blessed One: "Lord, may the Blessed One, the King of Truth, be patient! ["That has a familiar ring," interrupted the Student, quizzically.] Lord, may the Blessed One quietly enjoy the bliss he has obtained already in this life! The responsibility for these altercations and contentions, for this disunion and quarrel, will rest with us alone." And the Blessed One thought: "Truly these fools are infatuate; it is no easy task to administer instruction to them,"—and he rose from his seat and went away. And after collecting alms, and after his meal, and after he had put his resting-place in order, he returned to the assembly of his disciples, once more addressing them on the subject of love and hatred. " 'He has reviled me, he has beaten me, he has oppressed me, he has robbed me',—in those who nurse such thoughts, hatred will never be appeased."

"It was no discovery,—that 'these fools are infatuate'," the Orientalist continued. "Buddha, immediately after he had attained Nirvâna, and before he began to preach, is said to have doubted the utility of revealing his doctrine to the world.

"And the more he pondered over this matter, the more 'his mind became inclined to remain in quiet, and not to preach the doctrine' (*Mahâvâgga*, I, 5, 2-4). In this crisis the supreme Brahmâ appealed to him; and then:

The Blessed One, when he had heard Brahmâ's solicitation, looked, full of compassion towards sentient beings, over the world, with his (all-perceiving) eye of a Buddha. And the Blessed One, looking over the world with his eye of a Buddha, saw beings whose mental eyes were darkened by scarcely any dust, and beings whose eyes were covered by much dust, beings sharp of sense and blunt of sense, of good disposition and of bad disposition, easy to instruct and difficult to instruct, some of them seeing the dangers of future life and sin . . . And when he had thus seen them, he addressed Brahmâ Sahampati in the following stanza: "Wide opened is the door of the Immortal to all who have ears to hear; let them send forth faith to meet it."

T.

Digitized by Google

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

DEAR ———

It is a law of the spiritual world that, in a real sense, we cannot ask a question until we know the answer, and, conversely, we cannot be told a truth until we already know it. Spiritual knowledge is a question of *being the thing,* not a question of having facts about it in our mind. We cannot help knowing about it, if we are it, and we cannot really know about it unless we are it.

Practical work for others. You have an unlimited field,—at your home, at your office, wherever you are. You can make yourself so cheerful, and bright, and pleasant, and inspiring, that you help every one you meet. If you are what you ought to be and can become, your mere existence will be a constant source of benefit to others, and in countless ways you do not understand. This may not seem to you sufficiently "practical," but I can assure you that it is. At the same time, do not neglect any opportunities to do outer, useful, helpful things.

Line of reading. You have the whole literature of the world at your hand. Select any branch and work at that. Follow your natural bent. What are you interested in? Science, history, poetry, art: it is all grist to the disciple's mill.

Concentration and meditation. These are very difficult subjects. The only real way to cultivate concentration is to cultivate concentration; and that means to try to be concentrated all the time, in everything you are doing, especially at your office or your duties.

Remember that holiness consists in doing common things heroically well, not in doing heroic things. This is a common misunderstanding, and the cause of much needless trouble. You can become a saint and a disciple in your present environment, doing your present duties, *better* and more easily than in any other. Even when we accept this as true, it takes a long time to see it as true;—to realize it, comes only with experience.

* * * * * * *

Remember that our whole purpose is that our members shall *be* something, not that they shall *do* this, that, or the other thing. It is a life; and therefore it is the motive, the ideal, the purpose with which we do everything, that counts. Watch your motives, therefore, and do not fuss with the facts of outer life too much. They will take care of themselves if your motives be right and if you are conscientious about living up to them. Be careful about speech. It is nearly always wiser to be silent than to talk. Talkative people, and you belong to that category, miss very much of what goes on around them.

* * * * * * *

Digitized by Google

It seems to me that it is wise, as you suggest, for you to go on as you have been doing, with the single addition of a conscious pressure to do everything you are trying to do always better and more faithfully. The spiritual life is an exceedingly simple affair, so simple that nearly everyone misses it in searching for something wonderful and striking. One of the difficulties is that we are not called upon to do anything dramatic, anything that appeals to our imaginations. We are, on the contrary, asked to go on living our ordinary, daily life, but to carry into every detail of it a spirit of consecration and recollection which will lift it out of the humdrum and prosaic, and turn our routine into a battle between good and evil. It is very hard to realize this. It is very hard to understand that heaven is gained, not by heroic sacrifice, but by the patient, unremitting, daily, little sacrifices, which are really so much harder to give. "A saint is not one who cultivates heroic virtues, but who cultivates the common virtues heroically well."

* * * * * * *

It is much more important to learn to meditate than it is to study, and it is much harder. . . . As far as meditation is concerned, I should try to do two things: (a) feel as *much* and as strongly as you can the love and devotion you find expressed in your prayers (I am assuming that you read some prayers as well as saying your own). Try to make yourself feel: deliberately cultivate the feeling. Then (b) try to keep your mind still, and watch for any response of feeling, or of ideas, but do not do this for long. Do not allow yourself to become negative: it is an *active* interior listening, not a mere sitting still and inert.

Learning to meditate is a task of a lifetime, so do not be discouraged by absence of apparent results.

It is, after all, a question of being something, rather than doing anything in particular. The whole fight is between self-will, represented by the lower nature, and the practice of obedience and self-conquest, represented by the soul. *Any* practice which mortifies the self-will, and which is according to the dictates of common sense, is good. We must practise recollection in order to do the other things we have decided to do—like not talking too much, hourly recollection, etc. . . .

Yours sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 2nd, 1913.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

The interest in spiritualism and the association with mediums was unfortunate. You must watch yourself very carefully for the least evidence of psychism, and stamp it out sternly if you find it. It is a complete bar to spiritual attainment. You speak of your "first vision."

Digitized by Google

What do you mean? Do you have visions? See things? I should like you to be quite definite in your replies to this, for it is very important.

You also speak of becoming dissatisfied with Christianity. Please do not forget that Christianity is the religion given by the Great Lodge to a third of the human race, including the portion of it to which you belong. Therefore your dissatisfaction with it is likely to be because you do not understand it, rather than because of its defects. Do not confuse Christianity, the teachings of Christ, with Churchianity,—the teachings of whatever Church or clergyman you happen to have heard. There is nothing in the world more elevating, more instructive, more spiritual, more inspiring, than the teachings of Christ. . .

With kind regards, I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 10th, 1913.

DEAR ———

I have read your letter of August 7th with great interest.

I think I understand your opinions of Churchianity and Christianity. But do not err on the side of condemning even the Church. Many Americans have been brought up with a perfectly unreasoning and illogical antipathy to the Roman Catholic Church. While full of corruptions and all kinds of evils of government and of belief, the fact remains that it has kept alive the spirit of Christ in the world for two thousand years, and still represents that spirit much more faithfully than the average Protestant community. Protestantism sacrificed very much of the spirit when it threw overboard the form. Most of the great Saints, who are the nearest and most worthy followers of Christ, have been in the Catholic Church, not only in the past, but in recent times. *All* the best devotional books are Catholic. I do not know of a single good one written by a Protestant. On the other hand, these facts must not blind us to the evils in the Church, to the deplorable conditions at Rome, to all the true things, of which everyone knows, that keep alive the objections to the spread of Roman Catholicism. In its present form, with its present spirit, I should be sorry to see it spread.

In other words, we must be tolerant, and wise, and willing to learn, even from Rome.

Both your "visions" were psychic, and it is absolutely essential that you should get on top of and conquer this tendency before you can hope to make much spiritual progress. The two things cannot exist side by side. We must go forward either on one Path or the other. Your having been in touch with such things in your past, will make it especially difficult for you. . .

With kind regards, I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

September 8th, 1913.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

You say that you used to pray for help and then wait for some outer sign, but found that the decision had to be made in your own heart. It is *through the heart* that the Master speaks to us, and not through outer signs: therefore cultivate more and more the habit of praying for help and guidance, and of finding it in the promptings of the heart or conscience.

You also speak of your desire to help humanity. It is a fine desire. But how can you best help humanity? You have neither the knowledge, nor strength, nor power to do anything, *save with yourself*. That is the only way we can truly help others,—by being something ourselves. In time, slowly, laboriously, we learn a little, and can impart a little of what we have learned. But for many lives, the only real way to serve is by struggling to fit ourselves for service. We teach by example, not by precept.

So you have your work,—to grow in holiness, by self-denial and self-conquest. It will keep you busy for years.

With kind regards, I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

January 20th, 1914.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

It is important that you should not become absorbed in outer activities to the injury of your inner life. The remedy for this is not to withdraw from activity, for that often means neglect of duty; the remedy is to realize that these demands upon our time, whatever they may be, provided they are not forms of self-indulgence, are the steps we must take, the means we must use, in the conquest of our lower nature and the training and self-discipline of our personalities. We often feel that if circumstances were different we could do much better, but the truth always is that life is providing us with exactly what we need to exercise those portions of our nature which require development. If we cannot progress in the circumstances which God has given us, we shall not progress in any others.

The attitude you speak of, of getting up after each failure, with the dogged determination to go on, is just right. In that spirit we win our Heaven, inch by inch perhaps, but still we win it. For Heaven is here and now as well as hereafter. Our first taste of it is in the joy of the struggle; the second, the joy of work done, of a battle won; the third, the joy of accomplishment.

Digitized by Google

Please watch your tendency to forecast the future. That "seeming to know what is going to happen" is psychic, not spiritual. You are many years, if not many lives away from the possession of spiritual faculties which would enable you to predict the future. But I feel that you understand this. . .

With kind regards and best wishes, I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

October 12th, 1914.

DEAR ———

There is much that I should like to say in reply to your recent letter. You say, quite truly, that the Master wants love and harmony to prevail, and that you have had to learn to forget self. But do not forget that often love and harmony cannot prevail, and that war and discord are less evil than the conditions they replace. The War in Europe is a case in point.

Are you sure that it is forgetfulness of self and love of harmony that makes you always the person to accept humiliation and seek peace in your domestic discords? I have known many people who would make peace where they should not, because they were cowards and hated a scene and a quarrel, and not because they loved harmony and were willing to forget self. They were doing what they really wanted to do, and avoiding what they disliked.

As for the War and our attitude toward it; there is much in the October QUARTERLY on the subject, in "Notes and Comments," and in the "Screen." I commend both to you.

War is the calomel of nature. When the sins of humanity begin to clog the system, a purge is needed, a drastic remedy—to clear the atmosphere. War does it. A violent but effective remedy. Do not let us be sentimental about it. We do not get sentimental over calomel, even if it cause us gripe and pain.

With kind regards, I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 8th, 1915.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

It is not easy to talk to others about the things of the heart and soul, and yet it is necessary, for we must have the help of our fellow-disciples before we can complete successfully the Great Adventure. No one has ever taken Heaven by storm, alone. It is said that we must have the help of our superiors, our equals, and those under us whom we have trained or helped.

We dread criticism. We dread criticism especially in those directions where we have a sub-conscious feeling that all is not just as it should be, but is just as we like it. We are afraid of being disturbed in our

Digitized by Google

pet ideas, and in our best-loved habits of thought and action. Our minds then come forward and tell us that we are shy, that we are properly reserved, that we ought not to lay the secrets of our hearts out on the dissecting table before the profane gaze of others, etc., etc. But this is all mental. We need the help of others, and get it only to the degree that we are frank and honest in our self-revelation.

You must judge of the experience you had . . . by its effects. Does it still inspire and encourage you when you look back upon it? The differences between true spiritual experiences and psychic experiences are so subtile, that only by their fruits can we know them.

You must not permit yourself to be discouraged. We all have our ups and downs, but this oscillation is bad, and must be controlled until our habitual mood is serene and poised, proof against the happenings of every day life. . .

Do you pay particular attention to your life, to being something. Knowledge will come in due time. You remember the *Gita:* "He who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time."

Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

February 6th, 1916.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

Procrastination—a very prevalent fault, has its base in Tamas, one of the three qualities:

Tamas—inertia.
Rajas—force, passion.
Sattwa—truth, wisdom.

I suggest that you read about these as they are described in theosophical literature, and so get a clearer idea of the quality of your fault. You will probably find it manifesting in other ways.

Of course the way to cure it is to insist upon denying the inclination: make little practices for yourself which you adhere to regularly and faithfully. If you postpone some daily duty, like keeping your accounts or something like that, select it as a beginning, and make and keep the resolution to do them punctually and daily, or at whatever is the proper time. After you have conquered this fault, or this expression of the fault, take another. Self-conquest comes from specific and definite efforts in little things, not from general and therefore intangible resolutions.

We always blame others for our own mistakes, but when we see that this is so—as you do—the trouble is on the surface, where it can be dealt with and so cured.

With kind regards, I am sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

November 25th, 1906.

DEAR ———

It is a pleasure for me to look back occasionally to last April and the good time we had at Cincinnati. I wonder whether you do the same thing? It was a privilege to have this opportunity to meet so many of the members, members with whose names I had been familiar for years, but had never met. I feel closer to you now. The bond which exists between us all is undoubtedly drawn tighter by personal acquaintance.

Now I do not want that bond to get slack, as it would in time if I did not have the good luck to see you again for some years; so to prevent this I want to write to you occasionally as the best substitute for a personal visit. . .

I trust that the work at ——— progresses to your satisfaction. Being human, we cannot hope to do all we should or all we like; but if we do all we can, we should rest content, and not fret because it is not twice as much. Certainly so far as we can tell, the Branch at ——— seems to be active and alive, with a fresh, vivid feeling that indicates that all is going as well as it can go in this troubled world where there is so much that is opposed to the spiritual principles which we endeavour to live and to inculcate.

The older I grow the more convinced I am that *living* them is the real thing. Unless we show by our own lives that what we teach is a power for good, we cannot hope to do much good to others; while, if we do live our principles, sooner or later we become a power for good in the community in which we live, that is out of all apparent proportion to our abilities and our seeming opportunities.

I believe that one person who really lives the Life does more good than twenty who only teach it, and that the measure of our usefulness in the Movement is indicated by the purity and goodness of our lives.

* * * * * * *

We may be quite sure that if our heart is in the right place and we try to do our duty as we see it, we shall not get into trouble through ignorance. The Master would be sure to see that we shall know anything that it is necessary for us to know. . .

So please accept my greetings and a clasp of the hand of comradeship and a word of good cheer, as we journey on the Path together. It is a hard task we have, and we need all the help we can give each other.

With best wishes to you all at ———, I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

Digitized by Google

REVIEWS

A History of Persian Literature under Tartar Dominion, by Edward G. Browne, Professor of Arabic and Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1920.

This thoroughly elaborated and generously illustrated work is the latest of a series of volumes in which Professor E. G. Browne has undertaken to reveal the intellectual and spiritual life of Persia to the West. The present volume covers the period 1265-1502; or, roughly, from nearly a century before Chaucer's birth to about a century after his death.

Much of the book is, naturally, occupied with the Tartar dynasty, the wonderfully gifted family, descended from Genghis Khan, "Prince of Princes," which played such a dominant part in medieval Asia, conquering an empire, or a series of empires, far greater than that of the Cæsars, and including China, India, Persia and much of Eastern Europe.

Yet military greatness is not the most striking quality of the Tartar, Mongol, or Mogul rulers—for all three names are applied to them; several of them were also writers; while two of them, Kublai Khan and Akbar, displayed, in China and India, a spirit of religious tolerance and eclecticism, genuinely Theosophical, which it would be hard to parallel elsewhere among the rulers of that or any other period.

Even more interesting than the historical and purely literary examples of Persian creative work, are the poems of the mystics. Among the best of these, are poems by Ibn-i-Yamin, who died about the year 1344 of our era; and some verses by Salman-i-Sawaji, who died a generation later, in 1376.

It is interesting to compare the spirit of these poems with the almost contemporary English "Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman."—C. J.

La Sociedad Teosófica y la Teosofia, and *Fragmentos, I Tomo*, are admirable translations into Spanish, recently published by the Venezuela Branch of The Theosophical Society, of Professor Mitchell's well-known pamphlet and of the first volume of Cavé's *Fragments*. Those members in Venezuela who are responsible for such publications, deserve the highest praise for their devotion and enterprise. The cost in labour and in money must have been considerable. The appearance of both books is sufficient evidence of the loving care which was given to their preparation. We congratulate the "Rama Venezuela" most heartily, wishing them continued and lasting success in their good work for the cause of Theosophy.—E. T. H.

In the January number of the *Harvard Theological Review* there appears an article entitled "Church and Religion in Germany," by Dr. Richard Lempp of Stuttgart, one time student in the Harvard Divinity School, and after four years of service as Chaplain with the German army in France and Belgium, now secretary to the Evangelischer Volksbund für Würtemberg. The editors

Digitized by Google

state in an introductory footnote that they requested Dr. Lempp to write the article for the *Review*, because "His studies and experience have thus peculiarly fitted him to deal with the subject" of "the state of religion in Germany as affected by the war, and its outlook in the period of reconstruction upon which —we may hope—the world is now entering."

Dr. Lempp does indeed seem peculiarly fitted to reveal,—both by what he says and by the way in which he says it,—the appalling lack of principle and of religion which is eminently characteristic of Germany as a whole today, and in past years. To all that he does reveal, Dr. Lempp is himself completely and complacently oblivious; and we wish that, in printing such an article of insidious propaganda, hypocrisy, and false pleading, the Editors of the *Harvard Theological Review* had at least disclaimed all responsibility for the opinions expressed, even if they did not see fit to disavow them.

In effect, we are to believe that the rehabilitation in Germany of religious faith, and of church prosperity after the revolution of 1918, was rendered almost impossible at the start by "the oppressive conditions of the Armistice." which "had crippled all railway traffic and even the postal service." Whatever dependence German religion may have on railway traffic, the author adds that, "In view, however, of the fluctuating value of money, the immense debt of the nation—the whole desperate situation, in which there seems no prospect of escape from starvation and economic ruin—the definite solution of these problems, especially those relating to financial support [of the churches] and school reform, will probably be delayed for a considerable time. . . . I may add, in this connection, that if our enemies should adopt a more reasonable attitude, and moderate their oppressive terms so that we may live, the churches in their new relation to the states may still be of invaluable service to the nation; whereas, if the present unreasonable attitude persists, chaos will certainly result, in which, as in Russia, the churches also will be engulfed. In that event, the moral as well as the material ruin of Germany will be sealed." It is not difficult to supply what Dr. Lempp conveys by ill-concealed innuendo,—that the brutal Allies, unless they soften their terms, will be responsible for the "moral as well as material ruin" of Germany. This conclusion is indeed startling, coming even from a German.

Nowhere in this article is there a hint of repentance, a single admission of the moral wrongs committed by Germany, an acknowledgment of the blindness of by far the majority of the German clergy, who aided, abetted and approved the War, and the way in which it was fought. On the contrary: "Many who were tired of war and the suffering it entailed blamed the churches for encouraging the people to persevere to the point of victory." Again: "Most of them [*i. e.* "the clergy"], *taking into account the state of mind of our enemies,* saw no chance of arriving at a mutual understanding"—which, if it implies anything, implies that the German clergy, even during the War, were informed of Allied press opinion, and had the chance to learn the facts. "Many people," adds this ordained minister, "were finally convinced of the soundness of that judgment only by the terms of the Armistice and the peace of Versailles"—a chain of logic which clearly disregards principle, let alone truth.

In view of the veils which propaganda and self-interest are throwing over Germany—her past mere peccadilloes and her future all admirable intentions,—it is well to note carefully the mental attitude of a highly educated and intelligent writer, speaking from the heart of Germany today. He sketches the different relations between Church and State since the Armistice, and refers to the "Kirchentag," a new (1919) Assembly of "Consistories, synods, theological parties, missionary societies, and Christian associations" of German Protestants. "Its first session was closed with the adoption of several very important declarations: An address to the Protestants of Germany regarding the ***humiliating impeachment***

Digitized by Google

of the Emperor and the *detention of our prisoners of war;* another to the Protestants in the lost provinces of Alsace, Poland, West Prussia, and Danzig [he fails to mention Lorraine]; and a statement regarding the German foreign missions, which have been *ruthlessly destroyed by our enemies.*" And over the page, "One of the saddest effects of our defeat is the ruin of our works of charity." (All italics are mine.)

The reviewer feels impelled to call the attention of QUARTERLY readers to such an article as typical of German opinion today. It is all too manifest that Germany is nothing more than an insecurely caged criminal, who is ready for escape at the first opportunity. That Dr. Lempp's article closes with an appeal for "a new prophet, some creative genius, who, amid present confusion of thought and the crumbling of foundations, shall point a new way"—and refers to the success of Rudolf Steiner's "theosophy," is significant. These are perhaps added indications of the extent to which Germany is blinded by psychic delusions, obsessed by her unmerited sufferings, "tied and bound with the chain" of her sins.

A. G.

Archaic England: An Essay in Deciphering Prehistory from Megalithic Monuments, Earthworks, Customs, Coins, Place-Names, and Faerie Superstitions, by Harold Bayley, London, Chapman and Hall; Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott, 1920.

This book would prove both fascinating and instructive to the reader interested in the survival of ancient wisdom through tradition, folk-lore, and symbolism. Madame Blavatsky laid great stress on the evidence for a kernel or substratum of truth to be found within all forms of tradition and folk-lore, and the study of a great mass of such material is sympathetically presented in the 875 pages of this book. The author's preceding volumes, *The Lost Language of Symbolism,* and *A New Light on the Renaissance,* which deal with the same general subject, have been commended for accuracy of scholarship and wealth of illustration.—A. G.

Precepts and Judgments, translated from the French of Marshal Foch by Hilaire Belloc (Henry Holt and Co.), serves as an excuse to remind our readers of an article by Professor Mitchell in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY of October, 1918, which dealt with an earlier book by Foch, entitled *The Principles of War.* Professor Mitchell's article should be read and re-read by everyone who desires to put Theosophy into practice. Theosophy has revealed to us that the principles which underlie the various arts and sciences are identical. It has revealed to us the true meaning of the law of correspondences, and of the Hermetic saying, "as above, so below." Professor Mitchell, in his article, made it clear that because Marshal Foch, with his amazing lucidity, lays bare the real principles of warfare,—everything he writes can be applied with equal force to the spiritual combat, and, in fact, to all the struggles, outer as well as inner, of daily life. A friend tells us that he preaches constantly to a group of salesmen from texts supplied by Foch: Foch, on 'how to sell'!

Take, as example, what is said about Discipline in *Precepts and Judgments.* Here is an answer to the question, so often formulated: How can I learn to work for and with the Masters? Blind obedience, says Foch, obedience to rules and to commandments, is but a first step, a step to be taken in the nursery. "To be disciplined does not mean, either, that one only carries out an order received to such a point as appears to be convenient, fair, rational or possible. It means that one [deeply studies and then] frankly adopts the thoughts and views of the superior in command, and that one uses all humanly practicable means in order to give him satisfaction. Laziness of mind leads to indiscipline, just as does insubordination."—T.

Digitized by Google

QUESTION No. 254.—*Imagination and will are said to be the two great magical instruments. Life trains the will. Ought parents to train the imaginations of their children and if so, what are the best ways of doing this?*

ANSWER.—Surely it must depend on the source of the imagination. The making of images comes from two sources: (1) Reproduction of past experiences stored up in the astral (?) "memory," and these may have their origin in other lives as well as this; (2) creative impulses proceeding from the real man—the Higher Ego of the child.

The steady development of the spiritual Will is the road by which such creative imagination can become operative, and the methods must be those which train the will to overcome the selfishness which is, as a rule, the characteristic of the animal body and psychic constitution of the growing child.

In source (1), are included images which arise from physiological activities and the lower mind, stimuli from the outside environment, as well as those which arise from the Skandhas of past lives, and these latter, of course, may be deposits of (1) and (2). In the general principle, therefore, parents should educate the spiritual will of children by training them in unselfishness: and this calls forth the true image-making power of the soul. A. K.

ANSWER.—There is White and Black Magic. We must beware in which we train our children. Self-indulgence, self-assertion, self-will, and self-gratification are four of the Devil's warders—urging us to enter upon the highway to Hell. If a child ever be allowed to imagine itself as of primary importance, it is holding out hands to the four warders. Keep the child's imagination centred on the Path. It cannot begin too young to be obedient, to think first of others, to be decorous, silent, reverent, courteous, quiet and gentle. Let it practise its imagination by trying to be good. Give it ideals, such as those of a knight or a lady of old,—a Greek hero, a Saint, or again some historical character, like Richard the Lion Hearted, Washington or Lincoln. Let it establish some standard and then try to live up to the standard and by the standard. This may be made so interesting and picturesque that being good becomes as exciting as football. For that matter, the spiritual life may be illustrated by analogies drawn from the gridiron or the battlefield, or wherever men are called upon to sacrifice for an ideal. The very best training, of course, was laid down for us in two immortal words: "Follow me." This, however, requires that the parent himself should have started on the "Imitation." G. W.

ANSWER.—If imagination is a magical instrument, surely parents ought to train their children in the right use of it.

Two suggestions present themselves; both are vital. Help the children to know the Master as their best friend and constant companion, and also as their model,—as the one who understands them perfectly, because he has been through every experience and overcome every temptation. Make very concrete the temptations that come within every child's daily experience and make concrete also the joy of overcoming them.

The second suggestion grows out of the first—teach the child to know the two

Digitized by Google

selves, the higher and the lower. Take the very first exhibition of disobedience or ill temper, and help him to see for himself that this is the act of the lower self, that his real self is speaking to him and telling him what to do, but that he has opened the door to one of the devil's black angels, and that it is sitting in the place that belongs to his real self and is giving orders as if it were the real self. Gradually a child can learn to know the pairs of opposites,—selfishness, cowardice, laziness, carelessness, rudeness, and many others, and the virtues of which they are deflections. When he knows that the virtues are himself, and the faults are things that sweep over him from the outside, then he may come to look at them quite impersonally, identifying himself with the real self and throwing stones at the other as he would at a venomous serpent.

Pictures of the Christ Child, with his parents, his friends—both children and angels—and little stories about them, help in establishing a friendship with him. Then there are stories of saints who loved him and made him their companion, trying never to offend him,—St. Agnes, St. Jeanne d'Arc, St. Genevieve, St. Francis, and many others, and for the older boys, St. Paul.

How attractive is that picture of St. Teresa and the Christ Child, in which the little boy Jesus says, "Who are you?" "I am Teresa of Jesus," she replies, "and who are you?" He answers, "I am Jesus of Teresa."

Sœur Thérèse, at the age of six, being deeply impressed with the greatness and power of God as she looked out across the sea for the first time, said, "I picture my soul as a tiny barque with a graceful white sail, in the midst of the furrow, and I resolve never to let it withdraw from the sight of Jesus, so that it may sail peacefully and quickly towards the heavenly shore." Thérèse would write letters to Jesus and talk with him in intimate friendship and tenderest love. She says the first word she learned to read was heaven, and she ran and told her father. At play, she built altars in the garden wall and called her father to see them. He took great pleasure in seeing them, and lavished much love on his little Queen, as he always called her. Even at this age, Thérèse realized that the devil is a coward and, as she once said, "will fly from the gaze of a little child." To her, goodness seemed full of charms, and she gave her whole heart to Jesus and asked that she might spend her heaven doing good upon earth.

If we fill children's minds with the beautiful, there will be no room for the ugly. Children can feel the Master before they can see him. Make them understand this by analogy—it is true of the wind that lifts the kite, of the heat they feel from the sun's rays; when absent from mother, they can feel her love; the plant within the seed cannot be seen, yet they know it is there. Help them to believe in the unseen.

I remember a child who was told that God was everywhere, even in the littlest things. One day she sat cutting paper into tiniest bits, and when asked the reason, said, "I am trying to find God. Mother says he is in everything." Would it not have been wiser, safer, truer, to have taught her that he is the life in everything—as the *Gita* puts it in Book VII, "I am the taste in the waters, I am the light in moon and sun," etc. I think almost any country-bred child could add to this:—"He is the protecting love in the outstretched arms of the apple tree that I played house in. He is the power and strength of the oak. He is the joy in that little brook in which I built bridges and dams. He is the unity and love in the Sunday afternoon family walks." One could add many more instances, but each will do this from his own experience. How rich the life of a child who makes Him consciously a part of every experience!—and parents can make this possible, if they will.

Can we not all enter into the feeling of the little chicks, gathered under the ample wings of mother hen, at the sound of the harsh cry of the hawk? This is the Master's own imaginative expression of his brooding love for his children.

B.

Digitized by Google

T·S·ACTIVITIES

NOTICE OF CONVENTION

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

To the Branches of The Theosophical Society:

1. The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at 64 Washington Mews, New York *(new address)* on Saturday, April 30, 1921, beginning at 10.30 a. m.

2. Branches unable to send delegates to the Convention are *earnestly requested* to send proxies. These may be made out to the Assistant Secretary, Miss Isabel E. Perkins, 349 West 14th Street, New York, or to any officer or member of the Society who is resident in New York or is to attend the Convention. These proxies should state the number of members in good standing in the Branch.

3. Branch Secretaries are asked to send their annual reports to the Secretary T. S., Mrs. Ada Gregg, P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York, N. Y. These reports should cover the significant features of the year's work and should be accompanied by a complete list of officers and members with the full name and address of each; also a statement of the number of members gained or lost during the year; also a record of the place and time of Branch meeting. These reports should reach the Secretary T. S. before April 1st.

4. Members-at-large are invited to attend the Convention sessions; and all Branch members, whether delegates or not, will be welcome.

5. Following the custom of former years, the sessions of the Convention will begin at 10.30 a. m. and 2.30 p. m. At 8.30 p. m. there will be a regular meeting of the New York Branch of the T. S., to which delegates and visitors are cordially invited. On Sunday, May 1st, at 3.30 p. m., there will be a public address, open to all who are interested in Theosophy.

ADA GREGG,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.

P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York, N. Y.
February 15, 1921.

Digitized by Google

CORRESPONDENCE

Newcastle-on-Tyne,
England.
January 20th, 1921.

To the Editor of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY:

DEAR SIR,

In the current issue of the QUARTERLY the question is asked: Why did those who framed the Resolution agree to suspend judgment for a year? and it is answered according to the writer's view; as this answer does not at all coincide with our view we shall be glad if you will kindly give space for this letter in the next QUARTERLY (April, 1921).

(1) We agreed to suspend judgment in the same spirit and for somewhat similar reasons as those put forward by the Chairman at the New York Convention last April, when he submitted that the passing of the Resolutions should be deferred until the afternoon session.

(2) The second reason was that the resolution was said to have been brought up without notice and consequently sprung upon the meeting.

(3) The Resolution was opposed and it was felt that considerable discussion would be entailed, for which there was no time available, and further that a limited discussion would not reflect the considered judgment of those members who had not had opportunity nor time to arrive at a decision previously.

(4) The exact rule under which members could be expelled was for various reasons not available when demanded.

(5) The Resolution was not supported as it ought to have been and it was hoped that the slight majority would be considerably increased by so doing; and it may be added that we have now good reason to believe that it will be increased. We did not believe it untheosophical to fight it out on the floor of the Convention because we felt that it must be fought out there, and it was only suspended on the understanding that a decision be taken at the next Convention. It was felt that in fairness to the members the decision should be deferred so that each member could record his own considered and mature decision and we consider that the final result will be of far greater value, both to the Society and to the individual member, than any ill considered judgment which could have been rushed through in the very limited time at our disposal on the afternoon of the Convention.

We should like to add further that in our opinion the election of Mr. Kennedy as General Secretary was not made for the sake of peace. On the contrary two additional names were submitted for the office but for individual reasons both members asked leave to withdraw. This we now see was a mistake as it left Mr. Kennedy to be appointed.

We understand that the Executive Committee are now arranging for a referendum on the endorsing of the Resolution, and we trust that through suspending judgment at the Convention, the true position of each member will then be shown.

We are,

Yours fraternally,

I. W. SHORT,
FREDK. A. ROSS,
E. HOWARD LINCOLN,
Committee on Resolutions.

Digitized by Google

INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII

PAGE

Acle, B. N. 264

Blake, William; *C. C. C.* 207
BY THE MASTER, Isha Upanishad; *C. J.* 28
BY WHOM? Kena Upanishad; *C. J.* 111, 225

Cavé 13, 110, 205, 297
J. C. 37, 157, 312
Clark, C. C. 136, 207
Consciousness and Habit; *Henry Bedinger Mitchell* 248

DANTE SKETCHES; *Marion Hale* 237
Dudley, Stuart 245

E. 41, 259
Escape or Achievement (Reprint); *B. N. Acle* 264

Fragments; *Cavé* 13, 110, 205, 297
FRENCH REVOLUTION, THE; *J. C.* 157, 312
From a Journal; *H.* 341

Gates of Gold, The (Reprint); *Moulvie* 48
A. G. 117
Gossip; *L. S.* 221
Griscom, C. A. 50, 170, 277, 369

H. 341
Hale, Marion 237
Human Immortality and Pre-existence; *Henry Bedinger Mitchell*, 14, 126
Horizons; *Stuart Dudley* 245

IN THE HOUSE OF DEATH, Katha Upanishad; *C. J.* 320

Johnston, Charles 28, 111, 165, 225, 320, 346

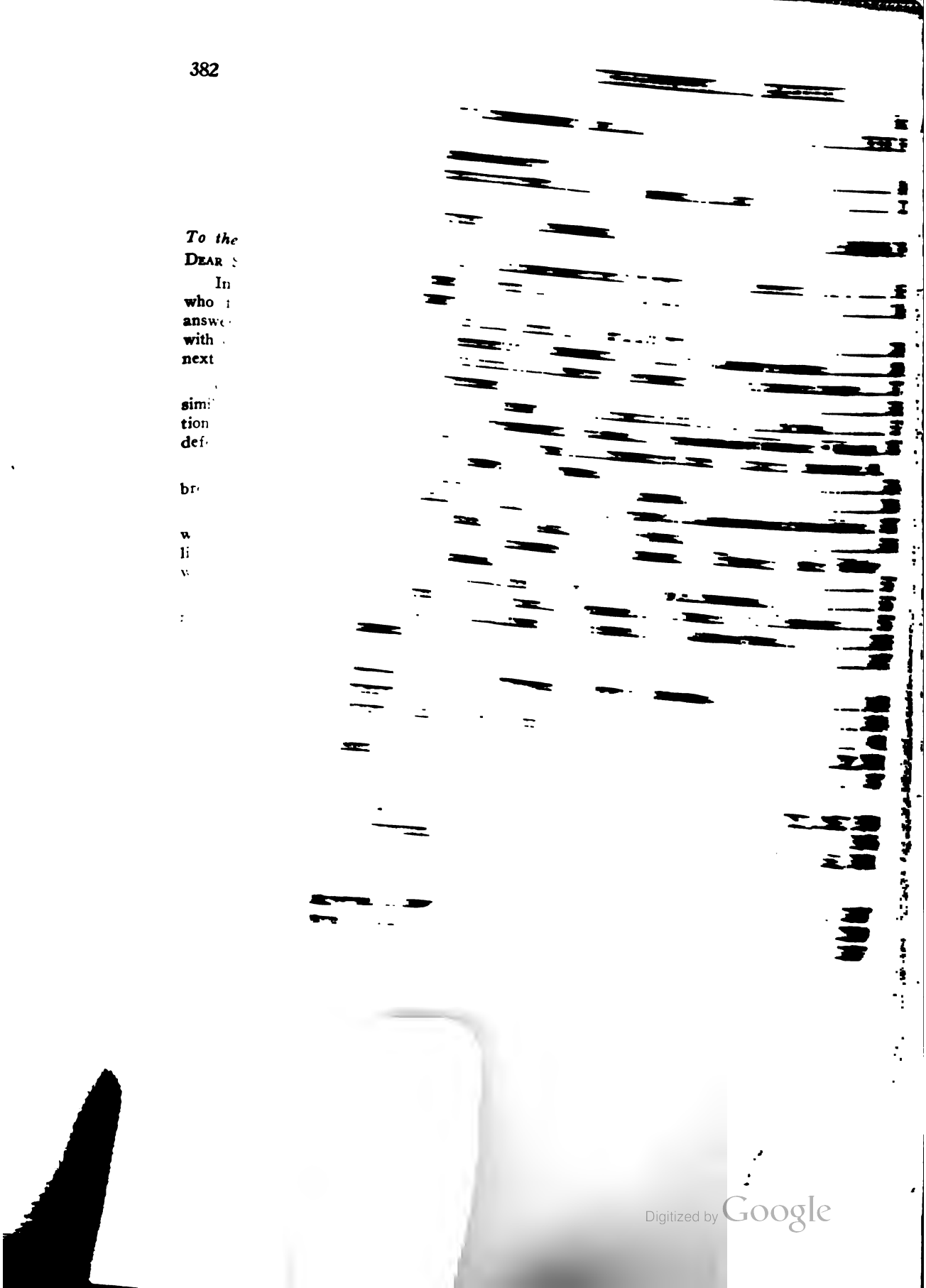
Knoff, Thomas H. 32

Labouring Layman 233
LaDow, Stanley V. 25
LETTERS TO STUDENTS; *C. A. Griscom* 50, 170, 277, 369
Life and Death; *Labouring Layman* 233
Logos Doctrine, The; *Stanley V. LaDow* 25

Materialism and Spiritism; *Henry Bedinger Mitchell* 298
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger 14, 126, 248, 298
Mouldings; *S.* 21
Moulvie 48

NOTES AND COMMENTS:
- Dangers of Psychism, The 289
- Theosophy and Modern Problems 3
- Theosophy, Science, and Religion 193
- Signs of the Times 97

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

STANDARD BOOKS

...sky, H. P.	Five Years of Theosophy		cloth, $2.50
	Key to Theosophy		cloth, 2.50
	Secret Doctrine, The. Vols. I and II and Index		cloth, 12.50
	Theosophical Glossary		cloth, 5.00
	Voice of the Silence	cloth, .85; leather	1.50
...K.	Fragments, Volume I	boards,	1.00
	Volume II	boards,	1.00
...llard, Katherine.	Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine	cloth,	1.00
	Primer of Theosophy, A	paper,	.05
...nston, Charles.	Bhagavad Gita	Translated, annotated; cloth,	1.25
		limp leather, India paper,	1.75
	From the Upanishads	paper,	.50
	Parables of the Kingdom, The	paper,	.50
	Patanjali's Yoga Sutras	Translated, annotated; cloth, India paper,	1.25
	Song of Life, The	paper,	.75
...dge, William Q.	Bhagavan Gita	Edited; cloth, .85; leather,	1.00
	Culture of Concentration	paper,	.10
	Letters That Have Helped Me, Volume I	cloth,	1.00
	Volume II	cloth,	1.00
	Ocean of Theosophy	cloth,	1.10
Keightley, Archibald.	Spiritual Life, The	paper,	.30
	Theosophy as an Influence in Life	paper,	.20
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger.	Meditation	paper,	.30
	Tales of Religion	cloth,	1.50
	Theosophical Society and Theosophy, The	paper,	.20
Sinnett, A. P.	Esoteric Buddhism	cloth,	1.00
	Occult World, The	cloth,	1.00
Walker, E. D.	Reincarnation	cloth,	1.75
Idyll of the White Lotus		cloth,	1.35
Light on the Path		cloth, .35; leather,	1.00
Through the Gates of Gold		cloth,	1.20

The foregoing prices are now correct but all publishers make their prices to be subject to change without notice.

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York

Bhagavad Gita; Fragments; From the Upanishads; Letters That Have Helped Me; Light on the Path; The Parables of the Kingdom; The Song of Life; Through the Gates of Gold; Voice of the Silence.
Pamphlets: Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine; Five Years of Theosophy; Key to Theosophy; Reincarnation; The Secret Doctrine; Talks on Religion; Theosophical Glossary; Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.
Inexpensive: Culture of Concentration; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditation; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

Digitized by Google

PAGE

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME; *T.* 175, 267, 359

Packham, Robert 148
Principal Problem, The; *Thomas H. Knoff* 32

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 60, 190, 286, 379

Realm, the Radiance and the Power, The (Reprint); *C. J.* 165
Religious Orders, The; *C. C. Clark* 136
REVIEWS:
Archaic England; *Harold Bayley* 378
Benedictine Monachism; *Rt. Rev. Cuthbert Butler* 188
"Church and Religion in Germany"; *Dr. Richard Lempp* 377
Fragmentos 376
From Theosophy to Christian Faith; *E. R. McNeile* 57
Gist of Swedenborg; *Julian K. Smyth and William F. Wunsch* .. 187
History of Persian Literature under Tartar Dominion, A; *Edward G. Browne* 376
India and the West; *C. R. Lanman* 284
Laotzu's Tao and Wu Wei; *Dwight Goddard and Henri Borel* .. 187
La Sociedad Teosófica y la Teosofia 376
Life of Viscountess de Bonnault D'Houet; *Rev. Father Stanislaus* 57
Story of an English Sister, The; *Ethel Romanes* 57
Through an Anglican Sisterhood to Rome; *A. H. Bennett* 57
What is the Kingdom of Heaven; *A. Clutton Brock* 285
Romance; *A. G.* 117

Saws—Bent and Otherwise: *Robert Packham* 148
STUDENTS' SCRAP BOOK 354
Studying Light on the Path; *E.* 41
L. S. 21, 221
Sufiism; *J. C.* 37

T. 175, 267, 359
TAO-TEH-KING; *C. J.* 346
T. S. ACTIVITIES 63, 381

G. W. 327
What we all Know; *E.* 259
Why do I Fail? *G. W.* 327

8

Digitized by Google

STANDARD BOOKS

Blavatsky, H. P.	Five Years of Theosophy	cloth, $2.50
	Key to Theosophy	cloth, 2.50
	Secret Doctrine, The, Vols I and II and Index	cloth, 12.50
	Theosophical Glossary	cloth, 3.00
	Voice of the Silence	cloth, .65; leather, 1.50
Crosbie.	Fragments, Volume I	boards, 1.00
	Volume II	boards, 1.00
Hillard, Katherine.	Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine	cloth, 3.00
	Primer of Theosophy, A	paper, .02
Johnston, Charles.	Bhagavad Gita	Translated, annotated; cloth, 1.25; large leather, India paper, 1.75
	From the Upanishads	paper, .50
	Parables of the Kingdom, The	paper, .30
	Patanjali's Yoga Sutras	Translated, annotated; cloth, India paper, 1.25
	Song of Life, The	paper, .75
Judge, William Q.	Bhagavad Gita	Edited; cloth, .85; leather, 1.00
	Culture of Concentration	paper, .10
	Letters That Have Helped Me, Volume I	cloth, 1.00
	Volume II	cloth, 1.00
	Ocean of Theosophy	cloth, 1.10
Keightley, Archibald.	Spiritual Life, The	paper, .20
	Theosophy as an Influence in Life	paper, .20
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger.	Meditation	paper, .20
	Talks on Religion	cloth, 1.50
	Theosophical Society and Theosophy, The	paper, .20
Sinnett, A. P.	Esoteric Buddhism	cloth, 2.00
	Occult World, The	cloth, 2.00
Walker, E. D.	Reincarnation	cloth, 1.75
Idyll of the White Lotus		cloth, 1.25
Light on the Path		cloth, .35; leather, 1.00
Through the Gates of Gold		cloth, 1.25

The foregoing prices are now correct but all publishers make their prices to us subject to change without notice

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,
P. O. Box 66, Station O, New York

Universal: Bhagavad Gita; Fragments, from the Upanishads; Letters That Have Helped Me; Light on the Path; The Parables of the Kingdom; The Song of Life; Through the Gates of Gold; Voice of the Silence.
Philosophical: Abridgment of the Secret Doctrine; Five Years of Theosophy; Key to Theosophy; Reincarnation; The Secret Doctrine; Talks on Religion; Theosophical Glossary; Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.
Introductory: Culture of Concentration; Esoteric Buddhism; Idyll of the White Lotus; Meditation; The Occult World; The Ocean of Theosophy; The Theosophical Society and Theosophy.

Digitized by Google

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avows its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religious and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread to this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

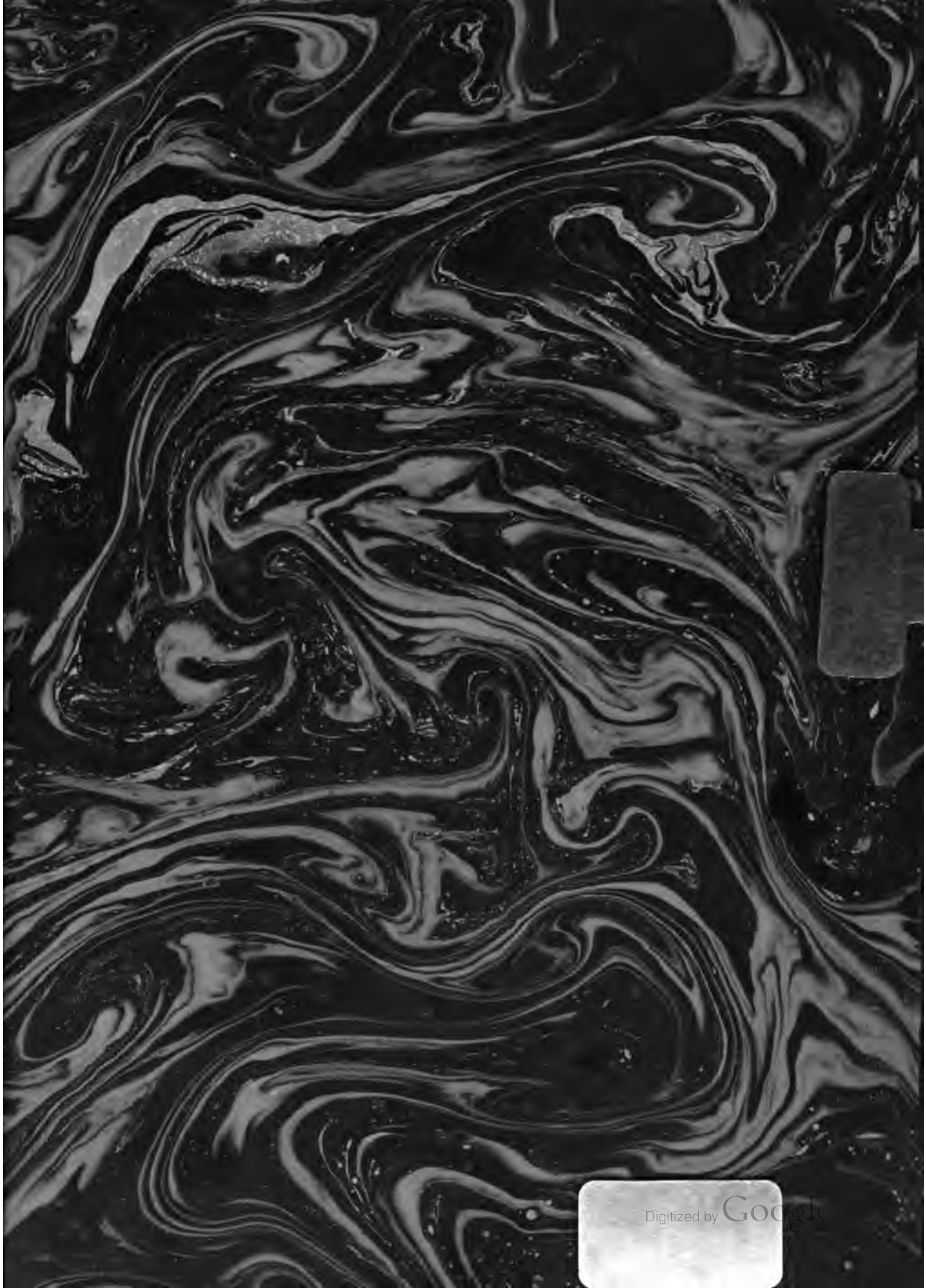
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google